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CORNHILL MAGAZINE

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EDITED BY
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DECEMBER
1935

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BOOK NOTES FOR DECEMBER

African Travels

LADY EVELYN COBBOLD has always shown great enterprise and initiative in her travels in that she chooses the unusual for her itinerary. A year or so ago she made the Pilgrimage to Mecca and has the distinction of being the first European woman to do so. More recently she has explored Kenya, and tells her interesting experiences in *Kenya: the Land of Illusion*. As might be expected, Lady Cobbold was not orthodox in her methods of getting to know the real country, and, whether she was exploring the roughest country by motor-car, or flying over it in an aeroplane, she found continually a new point of interest. She tells exciting tales of all kinds of adventures with game, large and small ; gives many lovely pen-pictures of African scenery by day and night ; describes the life of the people both black and white, and succeeds in doing what the authors of all good travel books should do—arousing an ardent desire in the reader to follow in the steps of the author. The book also contains many interesting photographs which were taken in various circumstances by the author.



A Study of the U.S.S.R.

WITH general interest centred on politics, a book which will arouse much attention and also be of much value, is *The Great Experiment*, written by Marcus Samuel, M.P., and Leonard Caplan. The authors have set out to analyse the results of the Russian Five Year Plans and to state what success or failure is meeting the Soviet's effort of industrial and social planning. They have conducted their investigations in an original way, and have studied the statements of leading members of the Russian Government ; every issue of the *Moscow News* and *Moscow Daily News* has passed through their hands, and on this official information by diligent comparisons of reports they have reached illuminating conclusions.

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BOOK NOTES FOR DECEMBER

The Heythrop Hunt

THE centenary of the Heythrop Hunt which was formed in 1835 to take over the country in Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire previously hunted by the Dukes of Beaufort, has just occurred, and to celebrate it Capt. G. T. Hutchinson, M.C., has written its history, under the title, *The Heythrop Hunt*. In addition to the author's narrative the book includes extracts of special interest from the hunting diaries of the sixth Duke's huntsmen, Philip Paine and Will Long, and reprints of subsequent articles dealing with the Heythrop Hunt by Nimrod, Cecil and the Druid. The book presents a vivid picture of sport in the nineteenth century and afterwards in a typical and increasingly popular and provincial country.

A New Edition of the Psalms

THE incomparable English of the Prayer Book Version of the Psalms with all the beauty of their spiritual content has long been admitted as one of the glories of English Religion and Literature. But many people have felt that the arrangement of them in 'verse—paragraph' is a barrier to the full understanding of them. Mr. Lionel James has now arranged the Psalms so that the lyrical beauty of them is unhampered, and grouped them according to their character or subject. He has also included other exquisite lyrics which lie hidden in other books of the Old Testament, and will publish his collection with the title *Songs of Zion*.



COUPON FOR ACROSTIC COMPETITION

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THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER 1935.

NOBLE MALEFACTORS.

By THEOBALD MATHEW.

THE House of Lords plays many parts. The Second Chamber of the Legislature, it is also the Final Court of Appeal both in civil and criminal matters. From time to time it is called upon to sit as a criminal Court of first instance. Impeachments are out of date; but the peer who is charged with felony is still entitled to demand that the proceedings shall be removed to the House of Lords.

During the past hundred years the House of Lords has had only two criminal trials to deal with; but in the eighteenth century a crop of blue-blooded offenders appeared in Westminster Hall.

A Duchess (really only a Countess) was charged with bigamy; an Earl and a Baron with murder. The Duchess and the Baron, though convicted of bigamy and manslaughter respectively, went free. The Earl made his way to Tyburn.

Of the three cases—they are all recorded in the *State Trials*—that of the Duchess presents most features of interest.

On May 24, 1775, onlookers in the Court of King's Bench at Westminster saw an unusual performance.

A stout lady of fifty or thereabouts, not without traces of former charm, was ushered into Lord Mansfield's presence. It was clear that she was a person of consideration, for she was attended by the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Northumberland as well as by the Sheriff of Middlesex. She had been waiting in an ante-chamber till Lord Mansfield and his brethren should announce that he was ready to receive her.

Arrived in Court the stout lady curtsied to the Judges, seated herself between Mr. Justice Aston and her ducal companion, and calmly listened to the reading of a long and tedious document by the Clerk of the Court. This concluded, she entered into recognisances, undertook to appear in the House of Lords on a later date, and then (as the report says) 'in a very polite manner, took leave of the Court and retired.'

It is not surprising that she should have comported herself with

so much dignity. *Noblesse oblige.* She was Elizabeth Chudleigh, Duchess of Kingston, whose case is known to students at law as the *locus classicus* in which the law of estoppel is expounded.

She had come to the Court of King's Bench to be bound over (herself in £4,000 and four sureties in £1,000 each) to appear to answer an indictment for bigamy.

That she must be tried by her peers was abundantly clear, for if she was not Duchess of Kingston (by reason of marriage No. 2) she was certainly Countess of Bristol (by reason of marriage No. 1).

She started life as the only child of Colonel Thomas Chudleigh, Lieutenant-Governor of Chelsea Hospital. He died, leaving his widow and orphan poorly off, and Elizabeth accordingly spent her young days in the country. When she was about twenty her good looks, which were remarkable, attracted the favourable attention of a Mr. Pulteney, and in 1743 he arranged that she should become a Maid of Honour to the Princess of Wales—that is to say, Augusta, the wife of 'Fred, who was alive and is dead,' and the mother of King George III. At Court she made a strong impression upon James, sixth Duke of Hamilton, then a youth of nineteen, and whilst this love-affair was still on foot, she had another, and a more serious one in its consequences, with the Hon. Augustus John Hervey, the grandson of the Earl of Bristol. A Lieutenant in the Navy, he met her both at the Winchester Races and at a country house where she was staying with relatives, and before long he persuaded her to marry him. Secrecy was desirable, for Elizabeth would otherwise lose her position as Maid of Honour, and on August 4, 1744, the marriage took place. The parish church was close at hand, and the rector (Mr. Annis) made no objection to performing the ceremony at night. He read the marriage service by the light of a taper carried in his hand, and they came home as if nothing had happened.

One of the witnesses of the marriage was a maid—Ann Craddock by name. She it was who informed against the bride later on.

The honeymoon was short. Hervey had to rejoin his ship, and Elizabeth went back to the Princess of Wales. Thereafter they lived together from time to time till 1747. But three years after the marriage troubles began and they agreed to separate. In the year of their separation a son was born and died. News of the domestic event got abroad, but the fact that a Maid of Honour had added to the population was not regarded in polite circles as conclusive evidence that she was a married woman.

Twelve years passed, and Elizabeth heard that old Lord Bristol was very ill and that her husband might succeed to the family honours. To fortify herself against disagreeable contingencies she set about obtaining proof of her marriage, and Mr. Annis was induced to make in the marriage register a formal entry of the fact that she and Hervey had become man and wife on August 4, 1744. This was a false move. Lord Bristol recovered his health, and Elizabeth had provided a piece of evidence which was afterwards used against her by her enemies.

Not long after her visit to Mr. Annis and the writing up of the register she met her second Duke. This was Evelyn Pierrepont, second and last Duke of Kingston.

He was about forty-eight years of age when the *liaison* began, Elizabeth being some nine years his junior. Walpole describes him as 'a very weak man, of the greatest bearing and finest possession in England.' His upbringing and his career had been suitable to his rank. Educated at Eton, he became a Knight of the Garter, Master of Staghounds, Master of the Treasury, and a General in Ordinary; and he had carried St. Edward's staff at the Coronation of King George III.

It was clear to Elizabeth that he was a more desirable husband than Mr. Hervey, whose earldom was such an unconscionable time in coming; and in 1768 she made up her mind to wait no longer. Her forthcoming marriage to the Duke was announced.

Hervey, who also had met somebody he wanted to marry, threatened to procure a divorce. As divorce proceedings would have necessarily disclosed the fact of her first marriage (of which the Duke had been kept in ignorance), she countered Hervey's attack by instituting in the Ecclesiastical Court a suit for jactitation of marriage; that is to say, she complained that Hervey was alleging, contrary to the fact, that she was his wife. It did not matter to Hervey by what means he got rid of her, so he fell in with Elizabeth's plan. He put in a 'cross libel' claiming that he was her husband, but carefully refrained from proving that he was. The suit, so collusively conducted, ended in a declaration of the Court on February 11, 1769, that Elizabeth was not the wife of Hervey and that Hervey was not the husband of Elizabeth.

All was now well, and she was free to marry the Duke. His Grace, like Mr. Jingle, hurried off to get a special licence; and on March 8, 1769, they became man and wife. Four years of married bliss followed, the happy pair residing at Kingston

House in Knightsbridge in great splendour, and then the Duke died.

If the Duke had been less generous to his widow the Duchess of Kingston's case might never have been heard. But as he left her all his real estate for life, and his vast personality absolutely, the Duke's nephews and nieces were much aggrieved. One of them, Mr. Evelyn Meadows, got into touch with Ann Craddock, who had been present as a witness at the first marriage, and the treacherous Ann told the whole story.

A few months after the Duke's death a bill of indictment for bigamy was prepared, and the Duchess, hearing of the proceedings, came back to England in her yacht from Rome, where she had been paying her respects to Pope Clement XIV.

Meanwhile, her first husband had become Earl of Bristol.

There followed the proceedings, already referred to, in the Court of King's Bench, and on April 15, 1776, the trial of the Duchess began in Westminster Hall. It occupied five days in all.

There was not a little discussion among the peers during the early stages of the case. First, there was a doubt whether the Duchess of Kingston could be tried, as the person named in the indictment was the wife of John Augustus Hervey. This problem was submitted to the Judges of the King's Bench, who answered confidently that the difficulty might be disregarded. Then their Lordships could not make up their minds as to the place of trial. Should it be in Westminster Hall or at the Bar of the House of Lords? Eventually, after much debating, the former was selected, and thither the peers repaired, severally provided with seven tickets of admission for distribution amongst their friends. This niggardliness gave rise to some discontent; but peace was restored when it was pointed out that the benches had been overcrowded at the trials of Lord Byron and Lord Ferrers, on which occasions the peers had received eight tickets apiece.

Before her trial the Duchess had demanded a *nolle prosequi* on the ground that the Consistory Court had already decided that she had not been married to Mr. Hervey, and the same point was put forward on her behalf when the proceedings in Westminster Hall at last began. Once more the Judges were consulted. Chief Justice De Grey, after deliberating with his colleagues, declared that the sentence of the Consistory Court was not conclusive 'on an indictment for polygamy,' and that the Crown might be heard to prove that such sentence had been procured by fraud or collusion.

Mr. Attorney-General then marshalled his facts ; the peers, taking an intelligent interest in what was going on, joined in the cross-examination of the witnesses ; and, after five days had been pleasantly spent, her Grace was pronounced to be guilty. The Duke of Newcastle added to his judgment of ‘ Guilty ’ the chivalrous rider ‘ but not intentionally.’

There was only one hitch in the performance. Viscount Barrington, called as a witness, was unwilling to give evidence. He was anxious to know whether if he absolutely refused to speak he could be guilty of perjury. This nice question of law was not determined, because it soon appeared that his Lordship had nothing to tell.

What sentence could be passed ? The offence of bigamy was a ‘clergyable’ one. If, therefore, the Duchess was entitled to the privileges of the peerage she might claim to be discharged ‘without burning in the hand, loss of inheritance, or corruption of blood.’ The Attorney-General argued strenuously that these advantages were confined to noble persons of the male sex ; but the Judges held that the Duchess had acquired nobility by marriage, and Elizabeth departed, a free woman, the Lord High Steward warning her not to do it again. She must have had a considerable bill of costs to discharge. There appeared for the Crown the Attorney-General, the Solicitor-General, Dr. Harris, Serjeant Walker, Mr. Maddock, Mr. Dunning and Mr. Hargrave, with Mr. Roger Altham as Proctor ; and the Duchess was represented by Dr. Calvert, Dr. Wynne, Mr. Wallace, Mr. Mansfield, Serjeant Davy, Mr. Cox, Mr. Leigh, Mr. Bullen and Mr. Hardinge, with Mr. Bishop as Proctor. Yet, with this multitude of counsellors, the Duchess had to make her own speech. It was not till 1836 that a prisoner charged with felony was permitted ‘to make full answer and defence by Counsel learned in the law.’ Dr. Calvert and his colleagues could only cross-examine and argue legal points. The speech delivered by the Duchess concluded with a prayer that ‘your Lordships, looking on my distressed situation with an indulgent eye, will pity me as an unfortunate woman, deceived and misled by erroneous notions of law, of the propriety of which it was impossible for me to judge.’

The Countess of Bristol’s subsequent career was of a rollicking kind. She went to St. Petersburg, hobnobbed with the Czarina Catharine, bought an estate in Russia, set up a brandy manufactory, conceived a romantic passion for an English carpenter, bought an

estate near Paris for £50,000, did not pay for it, was swindled by an adventurer who poisoned himself in prison, and nearly married Prince Radzivil. She died in Paris at the age of sixty-eight in 1788. Her habits, it is recorded, were coarse; but she was of a generous and forgiving disposition.

Fifteen years earlier—in 1760—Lord Ferrers had engaged the attention of the House of Lords.

Lawrence Shirley, Earl Ferrers and Viscount Tamworth was of unimpeachable pedigree, a fact attested by three MS. histories of the Shirley family preserved in the British Museum. The writers of these annals satisfied themselves that when the Doomsday Book was compiled, there was already a Shirley of importance who held lands in the counties of Warwick, Lincolnshire and Derby.

Beginning with knighthoods in the twelfth century, the Shirleys found themselves baronets as soon as the Order came into existence; and the seventh baronet, grandson and heir of the last Earl of Essex and claimant to the ancient barony of Ferrers of Chartley, was improved by King Charles II into an Earl and a Viscount. This nobleman died in 1717, leaving behind him the satisfactory family of ten sons and seven daughters. The first three sons succeeded him in the Earldom in due course; and on the death of the third Earl, his nephew Lawrence became the fourth peer of the line.

He was born in 1720; married the daughter (with whom he did not get on comfortably) of Sir William Meredith, Bart.; and having separated from that lady, became the father, by a more congenial companion, of four illegitimate daughters.

He succeeded to the peerage when he was twenty-five years old; and closed his career at Tyburn just before his fortieth birthday.

It may be stated with confidence that he is the only Lord Ferrers who has aroused the interest of the public. Of the eleven Earls who have decorated the pages of the peerage, one, it is true, became a Vice-Admiral and another achieved the dignity of Knight of Justice of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. But the rest have been content to live blameless lives as peers of the realm, and to demonstrate, by dying in their beds, that the tendencies of the fourth Earl were not transmitted to them.

The following bald account of the life and death of the fourth Earl Ferrers may be read by those who consult the *Peerage and Baronage*.

'Although not bereaved of intellect, this nobleman frequently evinced strong symptoms of a constitutional violence of temper, and in one of the paroxysms of rage habitual with him his Lordship put to death his own confidential land steward, an aged gentleman of the name of Johnson, in January, 1760, for which offence he was condemned to suffer death, and was executed accordingly at Tyburn, the 5th May following.'

It may be that he was 'not bereaved of intellect,' but were he to be tried in 1935 he would probably fare better than he did in 1760. There was abundant evidence to justify a finding that he was not responsible for his actions.

His uncle, Henry, the third Earl, after being confined as a lunatic, was released as cured, but 'relapsed' (to quote his biographers) 'into incurable madness,' and died in that condition. His aunt, Lady Barbara Shirley, was as mad as her brother and was also incarcerated as a lunatic; and Lord Ferrers himself seems to have closely resembled Uncle Henry and Aunt Barbara. He talked to himself (particularly in bed); he bit his lips; he was suspicious of those about him; he made grimaces in the looking-glass; he beat his wife; and he quarrelled with all his relatives. The wife-beating and other evil courses led to an Act of Parliament, a separation from his wife, and the appointment of a receiver of the income of the estates.

His Lordship thereafter let himself go; and his family held a solemn consultation as to whether he should not be dealt with as a madman. Unfortunately they decided not to run the risk of a successful action against them by Lord Ferrers.

He had a furious quarrel with a fellow-guest at Lord Westmoreland's house, he kept low company, drank coffee out of the spout of the coffee-pot, broke open the bureau of the wife of the innkeeper in whose house he lodged, and confided to various friends that he knew he was not responsible for what he did.

Indeed, the only evidence that he was not mad at this time of his life was that when his solicitors explained to him the niceties of the law of real property as a preliminary to the cutting of the entail of the Grainge estates, he followed the disquisition 'with acuteness and penetration.' But this itself would argue some abnormality of intellect.

Mr. Johnson was the receiver over the estates, and Lord Ferrers was dependent upon him for his income; and it was this that led

to the tragedy of January 18, 1760. Lord Ferrers desired Mr. Johnson to take a course which he regarded as dishonest, and Mr. Johnson refused.

His Lordship lived at Stanton, in Leicestershire, with his lady, four children, and five servants. Mr. Johnson lived in a farm half a mile away.

Lord Ferrers made an appointment to see Mr. Johnson on Friday, January 18, at three o'clock. His Lordship dined at two o'clock (he had had brandy with his tea at breakfast), sent the lady (Mrs. Chartley) out for a walk with the children, got rid of the two men-servants, and awaited the arrival of his guest.

What happened after was told by Lord Ferrers himself.

Lord Ferrers locked the door and asked Johnson to sign a confession of his villainy. Johnson having refused, Lord Ferrers drew a pistol from his pocket, made Johnson kneel before him on both knees and shot him through the body, just below the lowest rib, on the left side.

Half an hour had passed since Mr. Johnson had been first locked into the room.

Lord Ferrers now behaved with complete sanity. He despatched a messenger for a surgeon; he sent for Mr. Johnson's children; he summoned a maid to look after the wounded man; and he himself applied a bandage to the wound. Then he called for refreshments and applied himself to them energetically. Porter was the beverage he selected.

By the time Mr. Kingland, the surgeon, had arrived Lord Ferrers was in a communicative frame of mind; and he told the medical man all about it:

Johnson was a villain—Johnson had procured the Act of Parliament—he had told Johnson that if he did not confess his villainy he would shoot him—Johnson had not confessed and he had shot him. ‘I was determined to do it,’ said his Lordship. ‘I was quite cool.’ ‘I took aim.’ ‘I had long intended to do it.’ ‘I intended to have shot him dead.’

He added that he hoped, as he had not killed Johnson, that Mr. Kingland would do all he could for him.

He then sent for a bottle of wine, and continued his friendly conversation with the surgeon. It was now late at night, and Lord Ferrers before retiring to rest paid a visit to the invalid. The sight of Johnson appears to have annoyed him, and he repeated the charge that Johnson was a villain, and ‘ran up’ (in the words

of the doctor) 'in a violent passion to the bedside as if to strike him.' Then, having obtained an assurance from Mr. Kingland that he was not likely to be arrested, he went to bed.

During the night Johnson was taken to his farm, and early the next day he died.

It was now necessary to seize the culprit, who was making some preparations for escape. The neighbours gathered round the house and found Lord Ferrers, 'stockings down and garters in his hands,' on his way to the stables. One of them, Mr. Springthorpe, called upon him to surrender, but allowed him to slip back into the house, where he stood on his defence.

A crowd then gathered, and there was an angry altercation between those outside and Lord Ferrers, who stood at a garret window and told them what he thought of them.

Ultimately he made his way to the bowling-green, armed with a blunderbuss, pistols and a dagger; and then 'Curtis, a collier,' undeterred by these weapons, walked up to him and apprehended him.

The Coroner held his inquest, a verdict of 'Wilful Murder' was returned, and Lord Ferrers was lodged in Leicester Gaol.

A fortnight later, the Grand Jury of the County having meanwhile found a true bill for murder, he drove up to town in custody in a 'landau and six,' dressed in a riding-frock, jockey boots and cap, and a plain shirt.

He was lodged in the Tower and there awaited his trial by his peers. The Round Tower was his actual place of abode, and Mrs. Chartley and the family took rooms hard by.

The rebellion of 1745 was a recent event, and there was no lack of precedents. Everybody knew what ought to be done when a peer was charged with felony.

Robert, Lord Henley, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, was appointed Lord High Steward. He had been Speaker of the House of Lords as a commoner for some three years, and Lord Ferrers' misfortunes made him a peer. It was considered unseemly that the trial of a peer for murder should be presided over by a commoner, and he was accordingly created Lord Henley of Grainge in the County of Southampton a month before Lord Ferrers took his place at the Bar of Westminster Hall on April 16, 1760.

There was a strong team against him, Sir C. Pratt, A.G., the Honble. Charles Yorke, S.G., and Mr. Perrote (afterwards Baron of the Exchequer) presented the case for the Crown, but the noble

defendant, being charged with felony, had to conduct his own defence.

There was a great assembly of peers, peers' eldest sons, and Judges—the latter walking two and two. Lord Ferrers was brought to the Bar, knelt respectfully before their Lordships, and was graciously permitted to be seated.

The proceedings themselves were perhaps a little dull; and his Lordship was severely handicapped by his want of experience as a cross-examiner and an advocate. On the first day the case for the Crown was concluded; on the second Lord Ferrers called his witnesses.

Thomas Huxley was acquainted with the last Lord Ferrers and Lady Barbara Shirley, and knew they were both mad.

Mrs. Welhelmina Deborah Cotes said the same thing.

Two brothers—Mr. Walter Shirley (a parson) and Mr. Robert Shirley—several friends of the family, and Mr. Goostrey, Lord Ferrers' attorney, spoke of the strange doings of the accused, all expressing the view that he was not entirely responsible for his actions.

When the evidence had been called Lord Ferrers humbly confessed his inability to sum it up. He had written his defence down, he said, and would ask the Clerk to read it. This the Clerk did.

'I had no preconceived malice'—ran the peroration—'I was hurried into the perpetration of this fatal deed by the prey of a disordered imagination. To think of this, my Lords, is an affliction, which can be aggravated only by the necessity of making it my defence. May God Almighty direct your judgments and correct my sin.'

The Solicitor-General summed up the case for the Crown, asking their Lordships the question: 'Did he know difference between right and wrong?' The peers were unanimous, all using the formula, 'Guilty upon my honour.'

The following day Lord Ferrers was informed that he would on Tuesday next be taken from the Tower to the place of execution, and there be hanged by the neck till he was dead and that his body would be dissected and anatomised.

The execution of sentence was deferred, by reason of the prisoner's rank, till May 5. Lord Ferrers made his will, left £1,300 to Johnson's children, and provided adequately for his own family.

On the appointed day he was driven to Tyburn, at his own

request, in the carriage and six in which he had come up to London. Mr. Humphries, the chaplain, attended him.

Horse grenadiers surrounded the carriage, the Sheriffs and Under-Sheriffs went in their own chariots, one before and one behind. 'A mourning coach and six' contained some of Lord Ferrers' friends, and 'a hearse and six' followed in the rear.

He made a gallant end, in the suit of light-coloured clothes trimmed with silver which he had worn at his wedding. On his way to Tyburn he confided to the chaplain that he would like to stop at a public-house for a little refreshment, but did not insist, when the chaplain demurred. He had no complaints to make, except that he resented having to go to Tyburn. An ancestor of his had been beheaded at the Tower, and Lord Ferrers felt this precedent might have been regarded, all the more so as he was akin to His Majesty the King. His politeness to the executioner was extreme. He presented that official with five guineas, who, not to be outdone in courtesy, assisted his Lordship out of the world by applying 'pressure' at the critical moment. Criminologists should note that the newly invented 'drop' was used on this occasion for the first time.

Lord Byron's trial in the House of Lords on April 6, 1765, was a less distressing affair.

William, fifth Baron Byron of Rochdale, was born in 1722, a son of the fourth Baron, who had been Gentleman of the Bed-chamber to George, Prince of Denmark, the consort of the late Queen Anne; and he was, moreover, the great-uncle of the poet, who was to succeed him in the peerage in 1798. His acquittal on a charge of murder is his only title to fame. On appearing at the bar of the Court which was specially erected in Westminster Hall for the occasion, he was informed by Mr. Cornwall (with him Sir Fletcher Norton, A.G., and Mr. William de Grey, S.G.) that he was indicted for that on January 26, 1765, he 'did make an assault in and upon one William Chaworth and with a sword drawn in and upon the left side of the belly of the said William Chaworth did strike and stab giving to the said William Chaworth a mortal wound of the depth of six inches and of the breadth of half an inch' of which wound he had died on January 27 following. The noble prisoner thereupon pleaded Not Guilty, and Lord Northingston, Lord Chancellor and Lord High Steward, addressed to him a few dignified and, on the whole, encouraging words. 'The

solemnity and awful appearance,' he said, 'of this judicature must necessarily embarrass and discompose your Lordship's spirits, whatever internal resource you may have in conscience to support your defence.' But he reminded him that he had 'the happiness to be tried by the supreme judicature of this nation,' from which he would receive nothing but 'justice distributed with candour'; and he begged him to address his remarks to the Lords in general and not to any Lord in particular.

The Attorney-General then opened the case for the Crown. The lamentable incident mentioned in the indictment occurred, it appeared, after a dinner of the Nottinghamshire Club at the 'Star and Garter' tavern in Pall Mall. The members present were Messrs. Chaworth, Willoughby, Hewell, Molyneux, Donston, Sherwin, Mellish, and Mountagu, Lord Byron and Sir Robert Burdett. During the course of the dinner there was a discussion between Lord Byron and Mr. Chaworth on the subject of game preserving. Mr. Chaworth was of opinion that poachers should be dealt with severely; Lord Byron contended that this course was unnecessary, and that the best plan was to let the game look after itself. Mr. Chaworth, getting a little warm, opined that there was not a hare in Nottinghamshire but what was preserved by himself and Sir Charles Sedley. Lord Byron, also with some heat, declared himself ready to wager £100 that he had more game than Mr. Chaworth, and a note of the bet was made. There followed a controversy as to whether Sir Charles Sedley owned any manors, and, Lord Byron expressing a doubt on the subject, Mr. Chaworth suggested that he should refer to Sir Charles himself at his residence in Dean Street. An hour or so afterwards Mr. Chaworth left the room. Lord Byron followed him and asked in the passage whether he was to have recourse to him or to Sir Charles Sedley. Mr. Chaworth intimated that he was prepared to answer for his words; a waiter showed them into an empty room lighted by a tallow candle; and then events moved rapidly. Mr. Chaworth closed the door; turned round to find that Lord Byron had drawn his sword; drew his own weapon and made a thrust at Lord Byron which passed through his Lordship's shirt; and Lord Byron, shortening his sword, stabbed his opponent. Doctors were summoned, and Mr. Chaworth died the next day. Nobody had seen the fatal wound inflicted, and the evidence of the diners was on the whole favourable to the accused. Mr. Mountagu, who had heard the discussion about the preservation of game, had not

expected a duel to take place ; Mr. Donston thought that both parties were sober, but mentioned that Mr. Chaworth had asked him if he had been ' short ' with Lord Byron ; Dr. Cæsar Hawkins said that the dying Mr. Chaworth had told him he would rather be in his present position than lie under the misfortune of having killed another person.

Lord Byron, whose voice was not strong, requested the Clerk to read his defence. His story was that the light was bad, and that he was taken by surprise ; that Mr. Chaworth had thrust at him, cutting his waistcoat and shirt ; and that he had then wounded Mr. Chaworth, who said, after falling to the ground, ' You have behaved like a gentleman.'

Their Lordships' opinion was then taken, and 119 having declared that Lord Byron was guilty of manslaughter, he claimed the benefit of the statute of Edward VI which preserved the right of a peer to claim ' benefit of clergy,' unless his offence were murder, housebreaking or horse-stealing, and was released.

Lord Cardigan's trial, in the reign of Queen Victoria, is a good example of the absurdities which may result from a strict application of the legal rules of evidence.

James Thomas Brudenell, Earl of Cardigan, was, throughout his active life, a violent and cantankerous person. A soldier by profession, his military advancement, secured by cash payments, was rapid. He bought a cornetcy in the 8th Hussars in 1824 when he was twenty-seven years of age, and his cheque-book enabled him to secure the lieutenant-colonelcy of the 15th Hussars when he was thirty-five. Disagreements with his officers led to his resignation, and he was transferred to the command of the 11th Hussars. He was said to have spent £10,000 a year on this regiment, which earned the proud title of ' Prince Albert's Own Hussars.' The quarrels with his brother officers continued, and an account of one of them was supplied by Captain Harvey Garnett Phipps Tuckett—note the name—to the *Morning Chronicle*. Lord Cardigan in old-fashioned style demanded satisfaction, and a meeting took place on Wimbledon Common not far from the Windmill, on September 14, 1840. Captain Tuckett was wounded ; Lord Cardigan was arrested ; a true bill was found against him at the Central Criminal Court ; and on February 16, 1841, his Lordship found himself in the House of Lords making his three reverences to Lord Denman, C.J., who, in the absence of the Lord

Chancellor, acted as Lord High Steward. The trial in the ordinary course would have been held in Westminster Hall; but the recent destruction by fire of the Houses of Parliament had made access from the House of Lords to Westminster Hall difficult, and the Upper Chamber was therefore the scene of action. The indictment alleged that he had 'fired with a loaded pistol at Harvey Garnett Phipps Tuckett with intent to murder him.' Lord Cardigan pleaded Not Guilty; the Deputy Clerk of the Crown piously observed, 'God send your Lordship a good deliverance'; and the Attorney-General, Sir John Campbell, opened the case. Sir William Follett (with him Serjeant Wrangham and Mr. Adolphus) watched the interests of the accused.

The Attorney-General, in a careful opening, reminded their Lordships that no peer had been tried for felony for sixty-two years—he was referring to the Duchess of Kingston's case—and, after running through the various relevant statutes from 5 Henry V c. 5 to 1 Vict. c. 85, he told them the facts.

Two carriages were observed on September 12, 1840, arriving at Wimbledon Common from opposite directions, and the occupants made their way to the Windmill. It was clear to observers that a duel was to take place and that the seconds were measuring out the ground. Two persons were seen to take their places twelve yards apart and to exchange shots without effect. The pistols were reloaded, and on the second exchange of shots one of them fell. A surgeon, Sir James Anderson, who was in attendance, found that the wound was not serious; and the occupant of the Mill, Mr. Dann, who happened to be a special constable, promptly took all parties into custody.

Captain Douglas, Lord Cardigan's second, and Lord Cardigan himself were taken before the magistrates, and Lord Cardigan entered into recognisances to appear when called upon. Why did the duel take place? A letter written by Captain Tuckett had appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* of September 4, 1840, at which Lord Cardigan had taken umbrage. 'Lord Cardigan,' ran the letter, 'some time ago grossly and wantonly insulted an officer at the mess-table (desiring him to hold his tongue) and, when called to account, pleaded his privilege as commanding officer.' It went on to say that Lord Cardigan had now insulted the senior captain of the 11th Hussars and had once more claimed privilege; and the writer protested against the idea 'that a commanding officer may outrage every gentlemanly feeling of those under his

command with impunity.' Mr. Dann, the miller, was called. He said one of the gentlemen—he could not say which—had given him a card. The card in fact had been handed to the miller by Captain Tuckett; but as Dann could not remember who had given him the card Follett objected to its being used in evidence and his objection was upheld. Dann went on to say that on September 18 he had visited No. 13, Hamilton Place, and asked for Captain Harvey Tuckett; that he saw a gentleman; and that he was one of the persons he had seen on Wimbledon Common; and that he was the gentleman who stood opposite Lord Cardigan. Mr. Walthew, a chemist, said that a Captain Tuckett had rooms at 29, Poultry, which he used as offices, and that the same Captain Tuckett lived at 13, Hamilton Place. Follett once more objected that, to make this evidence relevant, it must first be shown that the Captain Tuckett of 29, Poultry, was somehow connected with the case. It seemed, however, that the witness only knew him as Captain Harvey Tuckett. Mr. Codd, an army agent, said that he knew Captain Harvey Garnett Phipps Tuckett, who had retired from the 11th Hussars, and that he was in the habit of handing him his half-pay quarterly at 15, Fludyer Street. Sir James Anderson, the surgeon who had taken part in the affair, was called, but declined firmly to give evidence on the ground that his answers would criminate him. Mr. John Busain, an inspector of police, who was on duty at Wandsworth when Lord Cardigan and Captain Tuckett were brought in by Mr. Dann, was expected to say that Captain Tuckett gave his full name as Harvey Garnett Phipps Tuckett, but as the names were given when Lord Cardigan was not actually present Sir W. Follett once more was able to object to this vital piece of evidence being given.

This was the case for the prosecution; and Sir W. Follett, having by now ascertained that the card handed to Mr. Dann had engraved upon it 'Captain Harvey Tuckett, 13, Hamilton Place, New Road,' withdrew his objection to its admissibility, and contended that the Attorney-General had entirely failed to establish that the name of the person at whom Lord Cardigan had fired on September 12 was Harvey Garnett Phipps Tuckett. The army agent, it was true, knew an ex-officer of the 11th Hussars of that name, but there was no evidence that the friend of the army agent was ever on Wimbledon Common. Nor was there any satisfactory evidence that the Captain Harvey Tuckett who had rooms in the Poultry was the same person who lived at

No. 13, Hamilton Place. There was thus, he argued, no case to answer.

The Attorney-General replied that he had established that Captain Harvey Tuckett was wounded by Lord Cardigan on September 12; that this Captain Harvey Tuckett lived at 13, Hamilton Place; that there was no real doubt that the same Captain Harvey Tuckett had rooms at 29, Poultry; that Captain Harvey Garnett Phipps Tuckett had been in the 11th Hussars and was on half-pay; and that no human being could doubt that he was the same individual as the Captain Tuckett who had taken part in the duel.

The Lord High Steward then invited their Lordships at large to accept the view put forward by the defence, telling them that there was 'an absolute want of circumstances to connect the individual at whom the pistol was fired, and who was afterwards seen, wounded, at Hamilton Place, with the half-pay officer who bore the names of Harvey Garnett Phipps Tuckett.' The noblemen responded to this invitation by saying severally that Lord Cardigan was 'Not Guilty, upon my honour,' the Duke of Cleveland cautiously wording his verdict 'Not Guilty legally, upon my honour.' Thus the proceedings terminated, and Lord Cardigan resumed his military career. Fifteen years later he led the charge of the Light Brigade on the field of Balaklava, and became a historic figure. His bust, decorated with the Dundreary whiskers of his epoch, may be seen at the Senior United Services Club.

The last trial of a peer for felony was that of Earl Russell in 1901.

The Crown alleged that Earl Russell had offended against Sec. 57 of the Offences against the Person Act 1861, which declares that 'Whosoever being married shall marry another person during the life of the former husband or wife, whether the second marriage shall have taken place in England or Ireland or elsewhere, shall be guilty of felony.' The facts were not disputed. Earl Russell had married Miss Mabel Edith Scott in England on February 6, 1890. The marriage was an unhappy one. In 1900 he obtained in the State of Nevada, U.S.A., an order for divorce from his wife, and in the same year went through a ceremony of marriage with another lady in that State. Lady Russell thereupon presented a petition for divorce on the ground of her husband's bigamous adultery; a decree *nisi* was pronounced; and on June 17, 1901, Earl Russell was arrested and charged with bigamy.

A true bill having been found by a grand jury, arrangements for his trial before his peers were made; the bill of indictment was removed before the House of Lords by writ of certiorari; Earl Russell's application for an adjournment of the trial to enable him to secure evidence from America as to his change of domicile to America and as to the validity of the American divorce was granted on terms to which Earl Russell did not assent; and on July 18, 1901, the Earl of Halsbury presiding as Lord High Steward and some 160 peers being present, the trial began.

The noble defendant was amply represented by Counsel. Mr. Robson, K.C. (afterwards Lord Robson), Mr. Horace Avory, K.C. (the late Judge), and Mr. Charles Mathews (afterwards Director of Public Prosecutions) were amongst those who appeared for him. Before the defendant was called upon to plead, Mr. Robson, K.C., moved that the indictment should be quashed as disclosing no offence. His argument was that the statute did not in express terms apply to a crime committed beyond the King's Dominions, and that the word 'elsewhere' must be limited to places within them.

Lord Halsbury, after consulting the eleven judges of the Supreme Court who had been required to attend, overruled the objection to the indictment; and, Earl Russell having under the advice of his counsel pleaded guilty, a sentence of three months' imprisonment 'as an offender of the First Division' was passed.

Since the proceedings against Earl Russell there have been certain lapses on the part of peers and peeresses; but they have been of the class known to lawyers as misdemeanours; and for such offences a member of the Upper House is tried as an ordinary citizen. It is only if a felony is alleged that a peer or peeress is entitled to be tried in the House of Lords.

A layman might well suppose that the felon is necessarily a greater offender than a misdemeanant. Such is not the case. It is a misdemeanour to obtain £100,000 by false pretences, and a felony to steal a pair of boots.

Why this should be so, no man knows.

The 'benefit of clergy' is a thing of the past. But a nobleman continued to enjoy the privilege belonging to a clergyman or one who could 'read as a Clerke' till 1841. By a statute of that year a peer against whom an indictment for felony is found 'shall plead to such indictment, and shall upon conviction be liable to the same punishment as any other of her Majesty's subjects.'

COVENANT WOOD.

BY J. R. YOUNG.

The following narrative is a substantially true record of experience. As regards strict accuracy of detail, the writer has exercised the usual author's privilege of reservation and pruning and would recall the saying of the old philosopher : 'For what is Truth ? Liveth it in the mere perishable five senses only ? Nay, for then were it perishable with them. But Truth, being imperishable, lyeth in the Mynde, in that imperishable Spirit which apprehendeth what the eye may not see nor the ear hear nor the understanding altogether encompasse.'

I HAD spent the night at Leadhills with the memory of Allan Ramsay, though I was unable to see the manuscript of his ' Gentle Shepherd,' as the key of the museum was in the pocket of a labourer away to his day's work before I got abroad. This last day of October was fine and bright, and as I wandered down the Mennock Pass I was thinking more of Ramsay and his Patie and Roger, as the country people affectionately term them, than of Burns until a stone-breaker at the roadside hailed me and I sat on his stone heap and learned a little of his art. In return he bade me take from my pocket the little volume of Burns's poems I always carried with me and he read, magnificently, from ' Tam o' Shanter.' With dramatic passion the lines poured from his lips, with a pause now and then to explain a word which might be strange to me.

‘ He screw'd the pipes, and gart them skirl,
Till roof and rafters a' did dirrnl . . . ’

‘ Ye'll maybe no’ understand exactly the meaning o’ the word “dirrnl,”’ broke off the old man, lifting a shrewd pair of eyes to mine. ‘ Weel, I’ll tell ye. To dirrl . . . and the number of r’s that rolled off his tongue was glorious to hear. ‘ Ye’ll maybe ha’ been in a hoose when a’ the shutters an’ the doors were shakin’ an’ rantin’ in the wind. Weel, that wad be to dirrl . . . ’

The day was hot as summer and, as I dropped down to the main road at Mennock and turned right-handed for Sanquahar on my way to Cumnock, I decided that it was no weather for tramping highways and that the hills and chance offered a far better alternative. It was between three and four in the afternoon when

I crossed the railway line and again felt the spring of the turf under my feet and I took off my shoes and stockings in order to feel it better still. There is a wonderful freshness and comfort to be found in the contact of short hill turf on the bare soles. My plan was to take a half-circular line over the spur of hills that jut down into Cumnock and, if I did not reach that village by nightfall, no doubt I should find some farm or shepherd's house which would take me in. I went so far as to earmark one on the map in case of emergencies, though I did not expect to have any difficulty in making my ultimate point. On the map the distance was not great, the afternoon light had that lingering quality which makes one forget it can ever end and—I had not reckoned with the roughness and loneliness of that spur of hills.

After following the crest of a ridge for about an hour, I found a forked track and, taking the more westerly branch, passed a minute tin school-house, surely one of the loneliest in the country. Grouse and whaups were my sole companions until I spied a small cottage lying well off the track and, from the woman who was feeding the few hens, I enquired whether I was in the right direction to hit the only pathway marked on my map. She told me to keep on until I saw another such house as hers and they would be better able to direct me there. Her own topographical knowledge appeared to be limited. When I struck the second cottage, the yellow afternoon light was dimming perceptibly. I found a fierce, uncouth-looking man and a small girl who accompanied me to a rising piece of ground a few yards away. To the left, the hills fell sharply to a stream running in a miniature gorge. Some distance ahead, I saw a dim outline of stones against the faded heather. The man stopped and, with wildly gesticulating arm and a torrent of all but incomprehensible words, proceeded to give me my directions.

'Ye'll kip yon shtell on the bin side o' ye,' he said, swinging his pointing finger from the circle of stones: 'An' ye'll kip the bune side o' tither shtell yonder.'

I did not know either what a shtell might be, or the meaning of 'bin' and 'bune' but trusted to my powers of discovery.

'Ye maunna kip doon the hill for ye'll likely brak y'r leg if ye get doon in the rocks by the burrn,' he continued and then suddenly changed his tone. 'But ye'll be farr better aff to turn and gang back the way ye've come.' There was a shamefaced earnestness in his voice that surprised me. 'I wouldna gang yon

road mysen this nicht. It isna a road for a mon to tak', *this nicht*, much less for a leddy.'

I told him I would not think of turning back and, rather reluctantly, he repeated his directions about 'bin' and 'bune' yon shtell. 'But wull ye no' tak' heed o' what I'm tellin' ye and come agen the morrn? Yon's no a guid road to tak' *this nicht*.'

The slight emphasis he laid on those two words would scarcely have been noticeable but for the half-sheepish look which accompanied them and he would not offer any further explanation. Thinking that he must be afraid that I should not get down to the road before dark, and might spend the night wandering the hills, I assured him again that nothing would turn me back and, with a most expressive, 'Hmph,' he let the matter drop. If I would go, I would, but he was evidently not easy in his mind.

'Jean here shall gang wi' ye a wee while,' he said and the little girl proceeded to lead the way blithely enough. When we had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile, I told her she need come no farther.

'I suppose you know these hills well?' I asked her and, with a shy, 'Aye!' she led me to understand that they were as her own yard to her. 'I follow the kye,' she murmured. Then, to my foolish query as to whether she was ever afraid of the loneliness, she returned the unexpected answer:

'No' unless the hoose do be strook by the lightenenin'.'

'Does that often happen?' I asked and she shook her head.

'It did be strook once an' maybe it might be strook agen.'

As we parted I offered her a penny, but she put her hands behind her. 'I'll no' be wanten it,' she said and turned for home.

I discovered the two mysterious 'shtells' by which I was to guide my course to be a kind of stone sheep-fold, many of which are scattered about the hills to act as wind-breaks for the sheep. One lay above me on the hillside, the other down towards the burn so that I passed 'on the bin side' of one and 'on the bune side' of the other. In the half-darkness in which the whole landscape was now wrapped, I found it extraordinarily difficult to keep from wandering too far down towards the stream and the boulders where I might, according to the old man, break my leg. My general direction lay parallel with the burn and it ran so quietly in its gorge that, if I strayed very far from it, I was apt to lose my bearings entirely. The sky was heavy and there were no stars to help me.

I had been going for more than an hour since the little girl had left me and I began to think that I should never strike the downward slope to the roadway. The fourteen-odd miles which I had travelled so lightly in the earlier part of the day from Leadhills to Sanquahar now hung like leaden weights on my weary feet. I was hungry, too, and even a little uneasy, though I knew of nothing to make me so. The night was very still, the air rather close, the sky heavy on my head. All spring seemed to have gone out of the heathery turf and my feet began to long for the even surface of a road. I knew that even when I had found my roadway I had a good many miles left before reaching Cumnock and I had not gauged the position of my proposed farm-house refuge with any accuracy. High noon lends a light-hearted carelessness as to distance that soon dies in the pathless dark.

At last, when I was beginning to think that I had, in the common phrase, bitten off rather more than I could chew with comfort, I felt the ground slope downward under my feet and before long I was on the roadway. It did not pretend to be more than a rough cart-track, but at least, I thought, I could not lose it and fall into trouble among the rocks of the burn. For perhaps a mile I followed the track easily enough and then it entered a wall of pitchy darkness as it ran into a wide belt of closely growing pine-trees. I could not see my hand before my face and I had no matches. I bumped once or twice into a tree-trunk as the path unexpectedly curved and then I heard, loud and fussy, the sound of the burn which I knew the track should cross about here. There was no wall or fence to the road and, since there was apparently nothing to prevent me stepping straight off into the five- or six-feet-deep bed of the stream when I came to it, I went down on my hands and knees and crawled the next fifty yards or so until I had passed the danger zone.

Though the air outside was still enough, among the pine-tops was a little soughing noise, more like a sobbing moan than a natural breeze. Suddenly an owl hooted just above me : it was answered immediately by another and yet a third. They did not hoot loudly : indeed, there was a muffled note, something indescribably conspiratorial and surreptitious in the sound and the skin began to creep on the back of my neck. ‘Ooh—oo—ooh !’ went the birds. ‘Aah—aa—aaah !’ answered the breeze in the tree-tops.

‘Hang it all,’ I told myself angrily. ‘You’ve heard owls before now.’ But my imagination retorted that I had never heard

owls such as these, nor such a vocally unhappy soughing of a wind on a windless night before. For there was no wind: not enough movement in the air, really, even to stir the topmost pine needles.

Suddenly the whole wood was alive with sighing. In the dead stillness of the night I heard a great rushing, scrambling noise and then a rending crash and, though in an instant my common sense told me that it must be a branch falling, it scared me horribly and against all reason. A vicious little voice asked me why, on a perfectly still, warm night, a bough should fall and make, in its fall past tall naked tree-trunks, such a noise of rushing and tearing. The little voice went sullenly unanswered. I looked up and a great, ghastly white face looked down at me with an expression of horrible anguish. It was gone in an instant, but my heart turned over sickeningly.

'It must have been an owl,' I told myself and then wondered that I had to explain it so precisely when, ordinarily, the explanation would have flashed into my brain instantly and automatically. 'Of course it was an owl,' I agreed stubbornly with myself and moved on, only, the next moment, to stand horribly rooted with terror at the sight of a long, dangling white thing, a decomposed body or skeleton almost imperceptibly swinging from high up in one of the trees. The sweat burst out on my forehead and my hands were clammy. Another owl gave a muffled hoot away to the left. The face showed again, bulging eyes in horrible whiteness with a long black oval of a hollow mouth all awry with anguish. As a low, half-chuckle, half long-drawn groan struck my terrified ears, I took to my heels and ran. Stumbling, slipping over knuckled roots, rocks and fallen branches, I lost the path and, tripping, fell headlong with, I am ashamed to say, a scream of terror. Shaken and breathless with panic as well as with the fall, I lay, unable to move and immediately the whole wood became horribly alive. Rushings and crashings among the tree-trunks: a sound as of a frustrated stampede: a horrible long 'Aah—aah!' of vindictive triumph and then a far more horrible clucking and blowing and choking gurgle as I looked fearfully up to see yet another long white skeleton dangling witlessly in the darkness. I think that at that moment I must have fainted from sheer unreasoning terror but presently recovered consciousness to hear the sound, indescribably comforting, of drunken men singing in the far distance. Then, immediately, my comfort was destroyed. From the wood

behind me came an answering noise of weeping, of moaning, of long, sobbing anguish, like a ghostly echo of the drunken revelry ahead, and, with it, the sound, muffled as though from very far away, of deep men's voices chanting some rather more than usually triumphant psalm. I recognised the cadence and from the far back of my mind came the memory of a men's meeting I had once overheard at some Lenten service chanting, with a kind of vindictive solemnity, one of the more comminatory psalms.

The sound rose and fell, not so much fading as being blanketed by those moanings and sobs which had preceded it. Terror seized me again and lent a spurious power to my fainting limbs. I did not know what might be the explanation of it all, but I fled. Running as though I were fresh started in the morning instead of bone weary and sapped with horror, I rounded a bend in the path and came full on my expected farm-house. 'Thank God,' I thought. 'I don't believe I could have made Cumnock to-night.'

The gaunt grey building showed not a light but, with previous experience of the kindness of the Scots peasantry, I never doubted that I should find, if not a vociferous welcome, at least kindly hospitality. Hammering at the door scarcely more loudly than my panting heart was hammering under my ribs, I at last heard a window open above me.

'Wha's there?' demanded a gruff voice.

'I've lost my way,' I replied. 'Will you take me in for the night?'

'Naw!' came the answer. 'I winna!' and the window slammed to again.

This was indeed a facer and I could not let it go at that. I hammered again and again the window opened.

'You must have somewhere I could sleep,' I begged. 'A barn or a hay loft would do. I'm very tired.'

'Whaur d'ye come frae?' asked the invisible man, and I told him that I had come over the hills behind the wood.

'Ye're come frae the Covenant Wood?' His voice sounded incredulous. I nodded, too tired to speak and forgetting that he could scarcely see me, and swift came his decision.

'Then I winna hae y'r like aboot on my place,' he almost thundered. 'Ye maun gae richt on tae Cumnock. I hae nae place for ye.'

'How far is it?'

'Sax mile an' a straight road.'

Again the window slammed, with an air of complete finality, and I flew into a rage of disappointment and fatigue.

'Thank God I'm not a Scot,' I lied, giving a valedictory bang on the door and hobbled through the yard on to the track again. There was nothing for it. Cumnock. Six miles. . . .

It was well past eleven o'clock before I at last found myself in the main street of the little town and chose the less fashionable-looking of the two hotels. It was shut and dark for the night and I rang for a long time before the door opened and a bull-headed man in shirt-sleeves surveyed me surlily by the light of a candle.

'I want a bed for the night, please,' I said, blinking.

The bull-headed man looked me slowly up and down.

'What'n a time o' nicht is this to waken folks, asking for a bed?' he growled, but he made room for me to enter. Planting his candle down on a chest, he bolted and barred the door with care and then, taking the light up again, submitted me to another close scrutiny, moving his detestable candle up and down till no shadows were hidden on me.

'Bed and breakfast,' he said, 'eight and saxpence, an' I'll see y'r money before ye go upstairs.'

Too angry and disgusted to argue, I paid him the money and then a pleasant-looking old woman, a kind of housekeeper, appeared and, looking carefully at me, took me upstairs. Too tired to think, I fell into bed and was asleep almost before I had blown out the candle. I slept till nine the next morning when I awoke full of battle and rang the bell. The old housekeeper appeared with a can of hot water.

'What is the charge for breakfast here?' I asked.

'Half a croon,' was her reply.

'Well, he made me pay for breakfast as well as bed last night,' I told her, 'and I'm not going to have breakfast here. Please go and tell him to give me back the half-crown.'

Rather to my surprise, she returned almost at once with the money.

'He's no' so bad as he mak's oot,' she said comfortingly, 'but last nicht . . .' She hesitated. 'Last nicht was no' the best nicht to choose, coming skelpin' in oot o' the darkness sae late.'

I went over the way to the other hotel for my breakfast and there I found a handbook of history and legend concerning the Cumnock district.

'The Covenanters here,' I read, 'suffered horrible persecutions.

Three men are known to have been shot in 1685. Five had been lying hidden for some days in the hills behind the town about seven miles away but were found and two, who showed more fight than the others, were hanged, after a scuffle, from the trees of a bordering wood. It is said that on All-Hallows' E'en the sound of the skirmish and the cries of the unfortunate men fill the wood, and their skeletons are said to have been seen still hanging from the trees. One which fell was hung up again. Their murderers subsequently marched the survivors into the town, chanting a psalm. This belief has such a firm hold on the people of the district that to this day no one from these parts will go near the wood on that night, and it is recorded that at least one benighted traveller, having lost his way, died of exposure on the outskirts of the town where no one, hearing that he had come from what is now known as Covenant Wood, would take him in.'

SAILORS

ALL sailors love immortal things
Like sunlit waves and wide-spread wings :
The scent of rope : the sound of bells :
Soft music : and the tale that tells
Of Love, and War, and wondrous trips
Made in the days of sailing-ships.
All these they love—with wind-swept skies,
Bright harbour lights and women's eyes.

L. G. W. WHITE.

THE GREAT LADY OF HOLBORN.

BY LAURA LUCIE NORSWORTHY.

THE LADY ELIZABETH HATTON lived in Holborn for half a century. This was so long that by the time she died few could remember what Holborn had been like without her. She had watched it grow from a pleasant rural suburb in the reign of Queen Elizabeth to an overcrowded place hemmed in by forts and towers and trenches during the Civil War. Neighbours came and went, built houses and pulled them down, but the Lady Elizabeth Hatton remained.

From her windows she could hear the bells of St. Andrew's pealing for a wedding, ringing for Divine Service, or tolling for the dead ; and across her garden, bounded by Hatton Wall, came the music and merriment of St. Bartholomew's Fair in the distance, louder or fainter according to the way of the wind or the stillness of the air. Holborn was proud of her. She was one of the most remarkable women of her time, and, if she did give everybody a good deal to talk about, it was always interesting and often original. She was granddaughter of the great Lord Treasurer Burleigh—she spelt it like that—and her name before she was married was the Lady Elizabeth Cecil. Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, was her uncle. She married Sir William Newport, nephew of Sir Christopher Hatton, the Lord Chancellor, and her husband took the name of Hatton when his uncle died leaving him co-heir to his estates. It was to his house in Holborn that the Lady Elizabeth first came as a bride. She was then in her teens, a great beauty, charming, unusual, and very happy. Her new home stood high up on Holborn Hill, next door to the Palace of the Bishop of Ely. To tell the truth, it had formed part of the Palace until Sir Christopher Hatton had persuaded Queen Elizabeth to hand it over to him, which had been done under colour of a mortgage. He had altered it, added to it, and called it Hatton House. It was a handsome residence with a double entrance and a gatehouse, reception rooms large and small, a long gallery, a vast number of bedrooms, a great courtyard, and offices of every description. The garden was a feature. It was

renowned for its roses, its strawberries, its watercourses and its trees. To the See of Ely it had to pay twenty bushels of roses in every year, ten loads of hay, and ten pounds of lawful money.

The Bishop of Ely—Bishop Cox—had made a fuss about the whole transaction and so displeased the Queen that, when he died, she left the See vacant for eighteen years. It was while the See was vacant that the Lady Elizabeth Hatton came to live at Hatton House. Life, then, had looked very promising. What might not be done with an intelligent mind, great wealth, a prominent place at Court, and a large circle of relations and friends in the same happy position ? She could give alms to the poor. She could fulfil all sorts of charitable and social obligations towards other people, besides enjoying on her own account pleasant parties in which music and dancing figured conspicuously, varied by hunting and hawking expeditions, and mummery and masques. But there is more in life than that, as the Lady Elizabeth Hatton soon found. Her husband died before she was twenty, and according to her own statement ‘with his breath all her transitory happiness expired’—though she was over-young to lose it, and there was small compensation to a loving, romantic girl in that he had provided for her handsomely, that she was very rich indeed. In later years there came a time when wealth did provide considerable compensation.

Sir William Hatton had been a widower when he married her, with one little daughter a few years old. He left this child to the care of her stepmother, and to her the Lady Elizabeth Hatton turned for what comfort she could find. It was not a great deal, for she was not left in peace for long. Suitors, anxious to take the place of the late Sir William Hatton, were immediately forthcoming, and her family obliged her to take one of them. She did not want to marry him at all. She wanted to nurse her grief, and, if ever she did marry again, to make her own choice. Her family dismissed these arguments as irrelevant, and before long she became the wife of Edward Cooke, attorney-general, afterwards Sir Edward Coke. He was forty-seven, a widower with ten children, rich, and likely to become richer. He was her family’s idea of a suitable husband for a wealthy young widow, but he was not hers. She married him with a very ill grace and there was trouble ever after. There was trouble also from another direction. Queen Elizabeth could not leave the See of Ely always

vacant, and in 1599—the same year in which the Lady Elizabeth Hatton became the Lady Elizabeth Coke—Martin Heaton was appointed to the See. He immediately demanded Hatton House to be surrendered to him, argued about the mortgage, and because the lady refused to part with any portion of the property they began to cross swords—a form of affray into which she entered with zest, and which lasted nearly as long as she did, for it saw Bishop Heaton through, and several other prelates beside, and ended only when Bishop Matthew Wren—uncle of the architect—was imprisoned by the Parliament in 1641, which left the See of Ely as good as vacant again for nineteen years. In the meantime the Parliament voted Hatton House the Lady Elizabeth's own.

It would take too long to relate all the thrusts and parries that took place, or to tell of the lady's domestic broils with Sir Edward Coke. That has been done elsewhere. When Queen Elizabeth died and King James I came to the throne Sir Edward Coke was in a short time raised to the Bench, but in spite of this elevated position he and his wife provided a comedy for the Court which went on for years. It was anything but a comedy to the lady herself. Sir Edward Coke believed in the old Biblical tradition that a good woman shows her worth by being an handmaid to her husband, docile in every way. His lady, on the contrary, believed in an equality between the sexes which shocked and amazed him—especially in a girl of her age—and he could not tolerate it for a moment. He tried Petrucchian methods of subduing her, but he never succeeded.

A man of forty-seven, with the ability which made him attorney-general and eventually Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, proud, arrogant, notorious for an obstinate disposition and a vituperative vocabulary seldom equalled, could, if he sought to bend to his will a delicately-nurtured, high-spirited girl, make her most unhappy. And this Sir Edward Coke certainly did. While he laboured to prove that there was no such thing as the Divine Right of Kings he believed in the Divine Right of Husbands, and though he strove to temper Prerogative as applied to King James and King Charles Stuart he upheld it rigorously as applied to Matrimony. His methods of doing so were not very delicate. He began by taking possession of all her property, including the large fortune she had inherited from Sir William Hatton, and, while allowing her to live in her own houses, refused to provide her with the means to do so until she should return to him a Statute he

had entered into before marriage for the purpose of securing her to wife—a Statute value £40,000 for the performance of promises. She refused to return it, but eventually gave way, because until she had done so there was an end of all harmony between them. The return of the Statute did not mend matters. He did not keep his promises, and there was no Married Woman's Property Act to help her. All she could do was to drag him before the Council table as often as she could.

He hurt her feelings and outraged her sense of right by refusing to carry out Sir William Hatton's testamentary bequests, and 'sold away the marriage' of Sir William Hatton's daughter. Quite early in the proceedings he removed the child from the custody of her stepmother. This was not effected without difficulty. Sir Edward Coke descended upon them both, broke open the doors, and snatched the child from her stepmother's arms.

Much trouble followed. The lady refused to take her second husband's name, and called herself Lady Hatton as long as she lived. Moreover, she would only allow him to enter her house by the back door, and Holborn grew used to seeing the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench sneaking into his wife's mansion through the tradesmen's entrance. After a time, his enormities growing so great, she would not grant him even that. They had two daughters, Elizabeth and Frances. His ideas about the disposal of Frances did not meet with her mother's approval. To be honest it must be admitted that they would not have met with any good mother's approval. It is a long story. It involved a number of people in a perfect vortex of trouble, which went on for many years, and put an end to any sort of married life between Sir Edward Coke and his lady.

Domestic discord changed Lady Elizabeth Hatton. Constant argument with the most learned lawyer in England sharpened her wits and taught her as much as she needed to know about the law. To say that she developed a strong mind is to put it gently. She was like a whirlwind sweeping all before her. Her numerous appearances at the Council table were marked by superb dramatic effect. She eclipsed Sir Edward Coke in wit, forensic skill, and in appeal to sympathy. But he was as tenacious as she was eloquent. Neither the Council nor anyone else could make him give up her wealth, and he held on to it till he died. Her turn came then.

She had better luck with the Bishops of Ely. When it came

to the Court of Requests she was as devastating with them, and emerged triumphant from their demands upon her.

She was a great favourite with Queen Anne of Denmark, Consort of King James I, who found her as entertaining as anyone she knew. It was a frivolous Court. Not that there was anything frivolous about the Lady Elizabeth Hatton. She was the peak of propriety where propriety was not always conspicuous, though the Queen did her best with the material at hand. In spite of her virtue she managed to live a most vivid and tempestuous life, never quiet, never dull. So much happened to her. Apart from her encounters with her husband and the Bishops of Ely, there were feuds with the Villiers family, and quarrels with the Duchess of Richmond, and a fence or two with Gondomar, the Spanish Ambassador, who, though a success with most ladies, made no impression on the Lady of Hatton House. Gondomar became her next-door neighbour at the Bishop of Ely's Palace at one part of the proceedings.

This was only one side of her character. The other was wholeheartedly kind. She embraced many of the perplexities of other people, and helped them when she could. There was Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, eldest and only surviving daughter of King James I, whose cause she espoused when that Queen lost her kingdom and went to live in exile at the Hague. That was why she fenced with Gondomar. There was Prince Charles, Elector Palatine, to whom she left £500 a year in her will because she approved of his political principles. There was her daughter, Frances, Viscountess Purbeck, whose troubles she championed through thick and thin. There were the Hattons, whom she always befriended out of respect to her first husband's memory. They would have been ruined by their adherence to the Royalist side during the Civil War, but she saved them from ruin, bought their lands and possessions which had been sequestered by the Parliament or sold to help the King, and left them back to them when she died. Besides these things there were numerous kindnesses and charities which she bestowed on people and which would make a long schedule if they were named. As for her political opinions, she was one of the greatest ladies among the Roundheads, and Hatton House was as busy as a hive on behalf of the Parliament.

She loved that curious, Stuart Holborn which is now no more—except in the names of some of its streets. Ely Place is where

the Bishop's Palace stood, and Hatton House was on the west of it. Hatton Garden is where her roses grew, and her fountains played, and big beds of flowers lay gorgeous among her terraces and lawns. She had a bowling green and a skittle alley and beehives and a dovehouse. Fields spread beyond her back gate, and led to Windmill Hill which had once been the Hanging Acre. Vine Street is where the Bishops of Ely had grown their grapes. There was no such thing as the Viaduct, of course, and St. Andrew's Church stood near the crest of a hill steep and difficult for coaches. It is not quite the same church in all respects because it has been in part rebuilt, but it stands on the same site, which is not easy to believe, so much has modern engineering altered the physical geography of that part of London. It was not London then—only a western suburb—for the City lay within the Walls behind the Town Ditch, and most of the Walls were standing—twenty feet high in places and nine to twelve feet thick—pierced at intervals by lowering gates and posterns. At the foot of Holborn Hill ran a river to the Thames, called the Holborn or Oldbourne in the upper part and the Fleet at the tidal estuary. It was crossed by bridges and dotted with landing-stages. It had once been a good-sized stream, large enough to take boats and barges, laden with merchandise, as far up as Holborn Bridge to discharge their cargo, but pollution had reduced it to what was called Fleet Ditch. When Lady Elizabeth Hatton lived it was sluggish, narrow, and heavily laden with rubbish, though its banks were busy enough, for they were lined by houses of office, tenements large and small, cook shops, butchers' shambles, pigsties, mills, and taverns, all ready to throw the offal for which they had no use into the waters below them. The stream had become greasy, malodorous, and often a menace to health. Periodically orders were given to have it cleaned; and at times storms in the reaches of Hampstead and Highgate brought down a heavy torrent of water which, swelling, swirling, and spreading, flooded the low-lying ground and carried the polluted matter into the Thames, sweetening the Fleet for a while.

It was not until the eighteenth century, after the Hampstead springs had been brought more or less under control, and so minimised the danger of storms and torrents, that the Fleet was converted into a covered canal. In times of flood there was still a great downthrow of water discharging into the Thames at Blackfriars Bridge. The final eclipse of the Fleet River took place about the

middle of the last century, and what remains of it runs underground in a bricked channel.

Near the Fleet Bridge stood the Fleet Prison, a gaunt and dismal place with a foss round it, communicating with the Ditch, and at one time having a footbridge across the foss. It was approached on one side by a watergate, as lugubrious and dark as a cavern's mouth, and on the other by a landgate equally unpleasant. The Fleet Prison had a long life. It is believed to have swallowed and disgorged its prisoners for a matter of eight hundred years or more, though the actual buildings were several times burnt down, and as often re-erected. It was abolished in 1844, the site sold, and years later the present Memorial Hall placed where the frontage stood.

Besides the Fleet Prison as a place of detention there were other reminders of the fate of malefactors—gibbets in Fetter Lane, a scaffold in Lincoln's Inn Fields (which was then waste ground) and stocks and a pillory. The Law was represented by legal Inns and offices, Chambers, and the dwellings of law clerks. There were a large number of taverns, some of them not so reputable as they might have been, and for water there were wells and a conduit, besides springs on Holborn Hill, which were so strong that at times it was impossible to keep them from flooding the houses and undermining their foundations. Beyond Hatton House lay Leather Lane, Gray's Inn, open fields, and the road to Hampstead. Farther out still were the King's hunting grounds at Marylebone, St. John's Wood, and Hyde Park, where footpads and cutthroats lurked, and darkness was unrelieved except by torch and link light and the moon when there was one. There were lanthorns of stone on Fleet Bridge for lamps to be put in winter, but without doubt Holborn was inadequately lighted.

Yet it was a Holborn full of beautiful Tudor buildings with older buildings just as beautiful and others growing ruinous—with narrow lanes, overhanging tenements, and covered alleys; with no sanitation to speak of, no motor traffic, or automatic control at the crossings, not even an organised police force; but for all that a much more attractive place to look at than the Holborn of to-day, provided nobody looked too closely.

The manor house was in Shoe Lane. It stood on the site of the Earl of Lincoln's Inn, that Earl of Lincoln who lived in the thirteenth century and who was the great de Lacy. He built walls round his house for the sake of privacy, and filled his garden

with roses, rosemary and cloves, and his orchard with costard apples, Rewl pears, cherries and nuts, and his ponds with carp. There was also a pool in the garden 'filled with small fish, frogs, and eels, with which to feed the pike therein.' He died in 1311, and Alicia, his daughter, inherited Lincoln's Inn. Since that time there had been many changes, and in 1598 the manor house was described by Stowe as 'one old house called Oldbourne Hall now letten out into divers tenements.' It had recently belonged to the Earls of Derby, but at the death of the fifth Earl, leaving only daughters and a widow, the question had arisen, To whom did it descend ?

The Earl's brother hoped to solve the problem by appropriating the property himself, which he did. The widow and daughters indignantly contested his right and hastened into the arms of the law. The widow in particular hastened into the arms of the Lord Keeper, Sir Thomas Egerton, who, after much learned argument, solemnly awarded her the estate, and then, to make sure that she got it, married her. At that period the manor contained 100 houses, 40 gardens, and one acre of land. In 1602, when it was sold to Sir Thomas Sackville, afterwards Earl of Dorset, it had increased to 300 messuages, 100 gardens, and 20s. in rent. It was eventually broken up among several owners, because Richard Sackville, son of the Earl of Dorset, having inherited the manor and involved himself in debt, could no longer retain it. He was Lady Elizabeth Hatton's neighbour, for Shoe Lane was not far from Hatton House. Other neighbours were Sir Francis Bacon, who had once been a suitor for her hand, Sir Kenelm Digby, and Gerrard the herbalist, who had been her grandfather's gardener.

She saw these neighbours come and go, and many others with them. Fifty years is a long while to live in any one place—so long that when she died her memory lived there still—in her great house—in the minds of men—and in the charities she had bequeathed, quarterly to be paid, to the poor of the parish for ever.

NOTE.—*A biography of Lady Elizabeth Hatton, by Laura Norsworthy, has just been published under the title 'The Lady of Bleeding Heart Yard.'*

THE CAPTAIN OF THE TURTLES.

BY T. WOODROFFE.

MR. SWIGGS held the tin at arm's length. As he turned it slowly round, cocking his head on one side and closing his left eye to help in the effort, he haltingly read out the writing on the label.

'There now. To think of that. Whatever will they be doing next? But that there picture,' he snorted, indicating the highly coloured representation of a turtle in the natural state, 'that ain't nothing like what a real turtle is like.'

Mr. Swiggs was, amongst other things, the local carrier, and he got up to give the mare her nose-bag before settling himself comfortably on the seat beside me.

'Where's that girl?' he demanded, rattling his glass.

'Two of the same, please, Jenny,' I said, and, 'Leave your thumb out of the glass when you draws mine, me dear,' added Mr. Swiggs with a wink at me. 'I once knew a master-at-arms up at the canteen at Malta,' he explained, 'what bought a row of houses through having a large thumb. Three hundred glasses a day, that's three hundred thumbs' worth, about thirty pints, say five bob in them days. Easy.'

'But the turtles,' I reminded him gently when he could see the tree-tops through his glass, '—you were saying something about turtles.'

'Me? Turtles?' He turned on me with an aggrieved air. 'Why, I was Captain of the Turtles once. Yes. For two whole weeks. Tuppence a day I drawed, and if it hadn't been for a lot of nigglygouging, I'd have been paid, too.'

The mare's head drooped. I lit my pipe, while Jenny leaned in the doorway with her hands on her hips.

'I was bow in the captain's galley at the time,' he began, 'and 'omeward bound from the Cape we touches with mails, see, at Ascension Island. Just a rock it is with a few inhabitants you can hardly tell from the goats, except the goats walks on all fours. Now there's a reggylation that any man-o'-war what calls at this here Ascension has to take home as many turtles as convenient, as the saying is, as the perks of the Lords of the Admiralty.

And they has a banyan and fills up on turtle soup, like the Lord Mayor.

' Well, seeing as how I kept a canary and was otherwise handy with dumb animals, the Bloke, that's the commander, he sends for me. I was a-polishing the brightwork on the captain's skylight at the time and when the messenger arrives and tells me sudden-like, "the Bloke wants you in his cabin," I gets such a shock that I drops me cleaning rag bang down on to the old man's desk. But while he was ringing bells trying to find out who was raining cotton waste on him, I was knocking respectful-like at the Bloke's cabin.

"Can't you read," he bellows through the curtain.

"Why, yes, sir," I says, "having passed educationally for Leading Seaman."

"Then why don't you obey orders?" he sings out. You see, he was one of these here efficiency fiends with "Do it Now" and "If you've got nothing to do, don't do it here" and such-like plastered all over his cabin, and on his door was, "Don't Knock. Come In."

"Habit, sir," I says, "I can't bring myself just to burst in unashamed, as the saying is."

"Dam what the saying is," he says, "now look here, you seem to be pretty handy with animals and to-morrow eight turtles is coming off to the ship alive, so you'd better be handy with them and keep them alive. You'll be relieved from the galley," he says, "and you'll take on as captain of the turtles."

"Aye, aye, sir," I says, brisk-like.

"Don't salute with your cap off and pick up that fag-end and the picture of your best girl," he snaps. "Anyhow, what do you know about such beasts?"

"Well, sir, they lives on lettuce and such-like," I answers, a-thinking of a tortoise I once kept in me ditty-box.

"Lettuce be blowed. Listen to this," and he picks up a great big dictionary. "Turtles," he reads out, and after a lot about all the other names they has . . . "and they subsist solely on Marine Alg'y. No, they ain't man-eaters," he says with a smile, seeing me give a gasp, "it just means they lives on plenty of salt water changed three times a day."

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Now you go and rig up a nice large tank on the starboard side the boatdeck for'ard of the captain's hens and stand by to receive them to-morrow. You get an allowance of tuppence a day."

' I leaves a-laughing to myself. How could these poor animiles be expected to sustain theirselves on salt water ? But of course, I said nothing, besides what that dictionary said, the Bloke was terrible when crossed.

' I goes for'ard and finds Dusty Miller what was a townie of mine, and between us we rigs up a big canvas tank.

" "Don't you believe it," says Dusty when I tells him they lives on the smell of each other. " My aunt's old man was a keeper at the zoo and he didn't feed no turtles on salt water."

" "No," I says, " he most probably got fed with nuts in the monkey-house instead."

" "Have it your own way," says he, angry. " But don't blame me when they all starves to death, and you can't make no soup out of their shells."

' I was a bit worried. You see, Dusty's aunt's old man has been so many things you never know as how Dusty mightn't be telling the truth.

" "Well, what do they eat ? " I asks.

" "Fish. 'Erbs. Anything like that," says he, easy-like.

" "Well, they won't do no harm with a bit o' slimming to start with," I gets back at him.

' When we got the turtles aboard and dumps them in the tank, they flaps round all lost-like.

" "Homesick, that's what they are," says Dusty. " Give 'em some more water and here, this may cheer them up a bit," and he chuck's in a bucket of sand and pebbles what he'd pinched from the topman's locker.

' Their backs was all covered with barnacles and wotnot, so after supper that night we gets scrubbers and sand and canvas and gives them a proper doing.

" "They loves it," says Dusty, " like pigs when you scratches their backs with a stick."

' Of course, all the lower deck was standing around looking into the tank and giving advice and enjoying theirselves.

" "If you don't mind," I says, " you'll oblige by usin' the spit-kids. I'm sick and tired of picking yer fag-ends out of here. These animals ain't old sailors and they don't chew tobacco."

' They calls the biggest turtle the First Lord and lays bets as to how old he is. Then they starts argufying how you can tell. A smart writer chap, he says, by the rings on their shells. " Ho ? " says a stoker, sarcastic, " like as if they was trees or curtain-rods,

I suppose," and the argument gets general and nearly breaks in one side of the tank.

"Every morning the Bloke comes up and inspects the turtles.

"Eight turtles, sir, please," I reports, as he comes along snapping his telescope.

"He looks them over. "I wants them burnished for Sunday Divisions," he says. "I wants them to look like the backs of hairbrushes on a lady's dressing-table."

"That's the worst of commanders, always worrying about that fourth ring and what the captain will think. Dusty and me, we works all Saturday make and mend, and after wearing ourselves to the bone we has them all tiddly for Sunday.

"While I was cleaning into the rig of the day, Dusty goes and shoves a border of white paint all round their shells. "Cutting in their water-line," he says when I asks him what in Gawd's name he's doing of.

"Well, it was too late to do anything about it then, they was just sounding off Divisions. We'd drained the tank and spread fresh sand, and I put a couple of pots of everlasting what I'd got at the Cape, just to make it look more natural-like.

"I springs to attention and off caps when I sees the captain coming.

"This is the captain of the turtles, sir," says the Bloke deferential-like.

"Ah. Splendid," says the Old Man. "We must get them home in prime condition, Commander. It would never do to upset their Lordship's digestions."

The Bloke laughs out loud and the First Lootenant, he titters, and so on down the line, down to the messengers who gives a respectful smile. Then they all looks over the edge of the tank. I could see the commander's ears going pink and his back hair bristling.

"Odd-looking turtles, Commander," says the Old Man. "Are you sure they are the edible variety? I don't seem to recognize the species myself."

"Oh, ha ha," laughs the Bloke, hollow-like. "I'm afraid the captain of the turtles must have been a bit too keen for rounds, sir. That white line is just fancy work. It's paint. I'll see it doesn't occur again, sir."

"I think you had better," replies the skipper, disapproving; "it never does to monkey with things like paint, you know. It might be corrosive or in some other way delirious."

' And with that they passes on, and I feels the savage 'ate of the Bloke as he passes me like a hot wind off the desert.

' No sooner had they piped down, than I was on the quarter-deck with me cap off.

" Ho. So you knows all about animals," he hisses at me. " Painting the poor things like they was hactresses. I'll paint you." Proper fierce he was. " None of your fancy ideas, my man, d'you understand ? Leave them animals as God intended them and don't go making them look like marine zebras. And keep your dam' flowers for your own grave," he finishes up.

I let Dusty know what I thought of his methods and we didn't speak again until his black eye was beginning to turn yellow. About the middle of the week, them turtles became all subdued. Instead of flapping around like girls learning to swim, they just lay quiet with their eyes closed, now and again wiggling one flipper. I tried them with a few spuds and a tin of salmon from the canteen, and I polished up their backs with metal polish, but I couldn't get no life into them. I got all hot and bothered supposing they was dying. How could I face the skipper with eight dead turtles Sunday morning ?

The Bloke spots they was kind of quiet-like.

" What's this ? " he says, fierce. " Why aren't these reptiles a-gambolling round as if they was happy and contented ? "

I explained they'd took to sleeping in the forenoons during the hot weather and became all girlish round about the dog-watches.

" Ho," he answers, suspicious. " When these here animals starts waking up, report to me and I'll come up and see for meself," he says.

Now I'm for it, I thinks. How am I to get them things skittish by four bells that same evening ? I changes their water, then turns them on their backs and scrubs their stummicks, but they just lay there like they was in a mooseum. The First Lord, he opened one eye and looked up miserable-like.

When I couldn't stand it no longer I goes to find Dusty.

" Dusty," I says, " seeing as how we're townies, I'm willin' to let bygones be bygones as the saying is. What about giving me a hand with these here turtles. They don't seem to be too happy," I says.

Dusty was rather pleased at being asked for his advice and he leaves go the cat what he was teaching to jump through his arms and comes over to the tank.

"All right, mate, seeing as how you're lacking in experience with animals, I don't mind giving them the once over for you." Dusty was still a bit sore.

'He looks them over while I explains the symptoms.

"Well," he says after a bit, scratching his head with the handle of his knife, "my aunt's old man saved the life of an armerdiller what had fretted itself nearly to death through a flea getting under its armour and it not being able to scratch itself, by a-giving it brandy."

"Do you mean these turtles have got fleas? Don't be ridiculous," I says, "they'd have drownded any flea by now."

"No, stupid. I says he cured the animal by feeding it with brandy," he answers all haughty.

"Well, he may have, but where do we get the brandy, I should like to know? Ask the skipper for the keys of his wine store?"

"What's wrong with rum?" asks Dusty.

"Rum!" I says, horrified. "Do you want to give those reptiles good rum?"

"It's their only 'ope," replies Dusty, solemn-like.

Me and Dusty we saves our allowance of grog, and what with promises and bribery we collects about ten tots. Of course, we had to swear we'd keep our messmates' turn of duty aboard when we gets back for about a month.

We puts a little in a fanny-lid and tries it on the First Lord. He gives a suspicious sort of sniff, then he opens both his eyes and was into it like a pig into acorns. When we reckoned he'd had enough for any respectable turtle we tries it on the others. It was like magic. Very soon them turtles was rampaging round looking for more and hissing at one another and going on all lively like they was at a wedding.

I goes down and reports to the commander.

"Ah. Very fine," he says as he looks them over, "you're to be congratulated, my man. Now see if you can't have them all animated like this for the captain, Sunday morning."

It looked like being an expensive business, feeding these turtles on rum, but we had a good lot left over, so we lays it by till Sunday. Next morning them turtles was sleeping it off, but by supper-time the First Lord was walking round slow and sorrowful like he had a splitting headache.

'On Sunday morning I asks Dusty to give them their rum

whiles I has me breakfast and cleans into the rig of the day. Dusty, being captain's cabin 'and, was excused divisions.

' Soon as they sounds off, I goes up to the tank. Them turtles was acting all queer. If animals has ever been drunk, them turtles was. They was walking sideways like crabs and a-snapping their jaws and waving their flippers in the air like they was all making speeches. Dusty had overdid it and no mistake. I turns the hose on them to cool 'em down a bit, but it only makes them more playful. It was awful.

' Presently I springs to attention as the skipper and his procession heaves in sight.

" "Yes, sir. Very well," the Bloke was saying, rubbing his hands and walking sideways, "I think we shall be able to turn them over in first-class condition." Commanders always takes all the credit and none of the blame.

" "Splendid, Commander. The Lord Mayor will be green with envy," replies the skipper, all hearty and friendly-like.

' Then he looks over the edge of the tank. He didn't say nothing at first, he just looked a bit puzzled-like. And I don't blame him.

' The First Lord was ambling like a crab across the tank with his flippers all wobbly and his wicked ole head stuck out as far as it would go. He chuck's his chin up like he was laughing and runs bang into the side of the tank. Then he subsides on to his stummick and waves his flippers in the air and shoots his head in and out like a piston. He reminded me of a fat leading stoker what they brought on board at Simonstown drunk and incapable. And all the whole lot of his messmates was acting equal scandalous.

' By this time the whole procession was hanging over the side of the tank, messengers and all.

" "Very curious behaviour, Commander," says the owner, puzzled-like. " It seems these animals are unwell. Are you sure they are having the right diet ? "

' The Bloke coughs and looks round at me, but I keeps on looking straight to me front. Then someone sniffs, the First Lootenant I think it was ; then the master-at-arms, he sniffs ; then everybody starts sniffing like they was a pack of 'ounds.

" "Seems ter me," says the captain, very stern, " that there's a smell very like rum around here," with his nose up like the rest.

" "Rum it is, sir," says the First Lootenant.

" "Yes, sir. Rum," echoes the master-at-arms.

' Then it dawns on the Ole Man and he swings round at me.

"Dammit," he says, "these reptiles are as drunk as lords. Have you been giving them rum?" he asks cold-like.

"Well, sir," I stutters, "seeing as how it was Sunday morning, I did give them a little bit of a pick me up, as the saying is."

"Pick me up!" he howls, "they've been bathing in the stuff. Have this man put below at once," he says, turning round to the commander who looked as if he had swallowed a corkscrew. And he stalks on with the procession all following on behind as black as thunder, all except the two messengers at the tail who was laughing fit to bust theirselves.

'When I comes up at the defaulters' table next morning, the Bloke he looks me up and down.

"So," he says as soon as he could speak. "So. You've been corrupting these animals' morals and endangering their lives. All right. You seem to be so free with your rum, you can do without it for a month. You'll go back and work with your part of the ship. No more looking after turtles for you. And you needn't expect to be rated Leading Seaman, not in this ship. If you aren't capable of looking after a few harmless turtles, you certainly ain't fit to be put in charge of no sailors. March him away."

'I loses me tuppence a day, and of all the injustice they puts Dusty and makes him captain of the turtles in me place. And to cap everything, them turtles arrives at Plymouth thriving.'

He gazed sorrowfully at an old man who was slowly making his way across from the post office to our seat. Mr. Swiggs took the nose-bag from the mare and climbed up.

'This is the cove what I've been waiting for,' he said, waving his whip.

'Come on, Dusty, look alive and we'll be 'ome just in time for dinner.'

THE DANCING DEAD.

BY ROBERT M. MACDONALD.

THERE are times in the lives of most men when the Call of the Wilds sounds very alluringly. That Call, however, is not always easily answered, because the Wilds are now difficult to find. Still, when a companion and I decided to shake ourselves free from the fetters of civilisation and again answer the Call of the Wilds we did not care much where we went. We already knew most parts of the world, and although the Call of the Wilds had never ceased singing in our ears since our last return to Britain it did not call us to any special place, so believing, like most wanderers, that some unknown fate controlled our destinies wherever we were, we secured passages on board the first available steamer sailing from Glasgow, where we were living at the time. We were going somewhere. At least, we had started, but where we might eventually find ourselves we neither knew—nor cared.

That vessel was bound for Canada and duly landed us at Quebec, and about a week later Big Sam and I found ourselves in Vancouver. Nothing which tended in any way to shape our future course had as yet occurred, but while we were waiting in the Dominion's great, western port a comrade of former wanderings known as Yukon Pete, who happened to be in Vancouver and had heard of our presence in the city, hunted us up.

'Where are you two sinners bound?' our friend asked in course of conversation.

'Wherever the Call of the Wilds leads,' Big Sam laughed. 'We're two first-class failures in cities.'

'I'm another,' said Pete, 'but I've struck a good thing up north a bit. Let's toss to see whether I should fling it up and join you or you two come back with me?'

'All right,' Sam agreed, and a coin was spun into the air.

I was not looking at the time, but evidently the coin decided that we were to go north with our friend, and he then informed us that for the next few months we were to find an answer to the Call of the Wilds in killing eagles. 'It's a paying game,' Pete went on, 'but you haven't got to talk too much about it. When we get

north to Prince Rupert you'll meet my chums and you'll find them as decent a lot as were our old mates.'

A few days later we proved that Pete's companions were all good fellows, but they hardly appealed to me as had done Mac, the Professor and some others of our former friends. Probably the fault was mine.

Eagle-killing was one of the oddest professions I had ever stumbled into. It is carried on to-day in British Columbia—especially north of Prince Rupert—by men who find it so lucrative, or enjoy the nature of the life so much that they do not talk about their work any more than they can help for fear of its becoming overcrowded. If asked by anyone how they earn a living they usually say that they are engaged in the salmon-canning trade. In a way they are quite correct, for, although many eagle-killers know next to nothing about the salmon-canning industry, if the young eagles that are brought to life in British Columbia were not kept down in numbers by the eagle-killers their voracity would soon be the means of causing some of the cannery factories to go out of business. This would mean that the price of tinned salmon in London and other cities throughout the world would be greatly increased.

But the eagle-killer's work ensures that mankind will continue to obtain salmon—in tins—at prices not rendered higher because of eagle competition. A bounty of five dollars is paid for every eagle killed, the number of heads the eagle-killers bring in when claiming the bounty being taken as sufficient evidence that the original owners are no longer alive!

The men with whom we were associated, and doubtless most others, plied their trade chiefly during the season when the salmon come up the many inlets of the British Columbian coast in endless silvery procession for their own mysterious purposes. Of course, the nets of the salmon-fishing establishments are waiting for them, and eventually they are packed in tins and exported to places salmon could not reach under any other known conditions, but many never reach the honour of being described by gaudy tin labels because the great eagles, whose homes are in the forest along the shores, are continually hovering over the moving horde and carrying off enormous numbers to feed the ever-hungry young eagles in their nests. There are three young eagles in each nest, and they have a capacity for salmon which seems unlimited, but in the attempt to satisfy their awful appetite the parent eagles do their best, and so are ceaselessly on the wing between the sea and their nests.

The eagle-killers, however, are watching. They have their camps in the forest and when one sees an eagle overhead with a fish in its beak he watches its flight as best he can until it reaches its nest, perhaps many miles distant, in a tall tree or in the face of a cliff. He notes the vicinity, and as soon as convenient afterwards will visit the place and locate the exact position of the nest. Then after making sure that the old eagles are away for salmon—he would not risk a fight with an old eagle for ten times the bounty—he sees that his long knife-blade is in order and climbs to the nest of squawking, squabbling eaglets. On reaching the nest he proceeds to business at once, and very speedily and skilfully—well—earns his bounty of five dollars per head!

Big Sam and I liked the camp life of the eagle-killers whom we had joined, but we had an aversion to their work which we found we could not overcome, and, in any case, that part of Canada was too cold for our fancy. Therefore, one day we said good-bye to our comrades and went south to Prince Rupert on a factory steamer, ultimately again reaching Vancouver. There, the sight of the old *Niagra* about to sail for Australia made us feel that the wilds of the sunny south were more attractive to us than those of the cold north, and when that steamer cleared for Sydney we were passengers.

We were tempted to leave the ship at Auckland, but reading in a Sydney newspaper which had somehow got to the New Zealand port that some old comrades had arrived in Australia's famous city, we joyously continued our journey, and about four days later Sydney Heads loomed up familiarly on the starboard bow.

But we could not locate any old comrades in the 'Queen City of the South.' Some had been in Sydney about a week before our arrival, we heard, but they had gone again, and no one whom we knew could tell us where. One afternoon, a few days after we had landed in Australia, Big Sam drew my attention to an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on the 'Great Barrier Reef of Australia.' The article informed us that there were thousands of islands inside the outer reef which were veritable Gardens of Eden and that they were as yet unoccupied, and were visited only occasionally by camping holiday-makers from the mainland of Queensland.

'A Garden of Eden sort of island is the very place for the simple life,' Big Sam commented when I had read the article. 'Let's get away north to a jumping-off place in Queensland before the island-home idea fizzles out with us.'

But the idea did not fizzle out. We boarded the train for

Brisbane that night, and from Queensland's capital proceeded by train farther north to Townsville, a hot sandy township which we had known so well previously. In Townsville we purchased a motor-launch and, after some enquiries, sailed out past Magnetic Island in a nor'-easterly direction towards the great outer reef which protects most of the coast of Queensland from the frequent fierce storms of the Pacific Ocean. During the afternoon we reached the inner island zone, but we were not easily pleased, and circum-navigated several before approaching sunset forced us to land on one. It was a palm tree-fringed piece of land about three miles by two in area, with a scrub-covered interior which sloped upwards to a height of, possibly, eighty feet. Apparently it had no name, officially, but, as it carried fresh water in some rocky holes and was only about thirty miles from the Queensland mainland, we thought it might prove as good as any other island for the simple life. It did; but here is some information concerning the islands of the Great Barrier Reef in general from which that simple life can be imagined.

The Great Barrier Reef of Australia may be said to be the largest structure in the world, having been built by the coral polyp. It is an irregular chain of reefs over a thousand miles in length. Between this rampart and the coast of Queensland is an island-studded sea which is fifteen miles wide in the north, but nearly a hundred at the reef's southern extremity. Some of the islands in this inland sea—such as Hinchinbrook—are considerably over a hundred square miles in area, mountainous, and quite near the mainland, but others—like Green Island out from Cairns—are low-lying palm-covered lands of only a few square miles in extent. There are also many hundreds of unnamed foliage-clad islets of smaller size still, and barren cays which form footholds only for sea-birds, exist in countless number. The absence of fresh water on most of the islands renders even the simple life impossible on them, but those which rise to any height above the surrounding expanse of scintillating sea retain water in rocky holes after rains. On those latter sun-kissed land spots life could be a pleasant dream existence without much help—if any—from the outer world. This was not always the case, but, thanks to the people who chanced to visit them years ago, it is to-day.

Those visitors—Government surveying parties, lighthouse builders, camping holiday-makers from the mainland towns of Queensland and fishing expeditions—placed poultry and other

domestic creatures upon the islands they were living on for the time, and, either by accident or design, also left in spots suitable for their development the seeds of the fruits and vegetables they had been using. Under the tropical sun, aided by rains in season and soil rich in the guano deposits of ages, the fruits and vegetables grew and spread, and are now flourishing, in a more or less wild state, around any source of fresh water.

The sea, too, is generous in its gifts to those who would live in an island kingdom of their own inside the Great Barrier Reef. The shallower ledges round the shores carry shell-fish of every description, and the plentifulness of other fish makes an island a fisher's paradise. Huge 'green-back' turtles which weigh anything between a quarter and half a ton emerge from the sea nightly to lay their eggs on the warm sands of the beaches, and those ungainly creatures can be intercepted and overturned—and thus rendered helpless—when, on being alarmed, they charge madly back to the sea. . . . The turtle flesh is cut into steaks and fried in the green fat of the upper shell, and the bucketful of shell-less eggs each turtle will probably carry can be cooked in a surprising variety of ways.

Big Sam and I took with us from Townsville a goodly supply of food stores, but we found we had no need for anything except flour, tea, sugar, salt, matches and tobacco, and we could have dispensed with some of those commodities had we so desired, as our island yielded even a substitute for flour in its paw-paws, pumpkins and other such vegetables.

One afternoon, while swimming in the warm waters near the shore, we began diving to see if we could reach some pearl shells visible on a ledge about ten feet down. We succeeded easily, and when we found one or two good pearls in the shells we had brought aloft, the desire for more grew strongly upon us. So strong indeed that during the next few days we spent all the time we were not engaged in cooking operations in getting pearl shells, becoming wonderfully proficient in diving. Of course, sharks were a bit of a nuisance, but they didn't seem to like the look of the eagle-killing knife we always carried, and never gave us a chance to use it.

Our stock of pearls increased daily, and we soon realised that the simple life on an island such as ours was also a very lucrative one. One morning, as I placed a wonderful stew on the fire ashes so that it would simmer gently until we were ready to dine, Big Sam remarked, 'I think there is a pearl-buying agent over in Townsville ?'

'Yes,' I answered. 'There is a man in Flinders Street who buys minerals and gems for a French company.'

'We could make Townsville to-night?'

'Easily, if we start without delay.'

'All right,' said Sam. 'This stew should be cooked well enough by the time we get back.'

Without another word we pushed our power boat into the water and got inside. We steered carefully between some adjacent islands, and in an hour or so sighted the Queensland mainland through a heat haze. An hour later still the lofty summit of Magnetic Island loomed into view, and knowing that it guarded the entrance to Townsville we headed for it and finally landed in the chief city of the north some time in the afternoon. We hunted up the pearl-buyer, eventually got what we thought was a fair price for our pearls and went round to an hotel we had known previously to get something to eat.

While sitting in the dining-room awaiting the lights being switched on, four men entered and sat down at a table near, and we could not help hearing their conversation.

'You have told us a strange tale,' one was saying, 'but your reputation is such that I fear no one who knows you will believe you.'

'Well, I can't help that,' the man addressed replied, and his voice sounded familiar to us. 'All the same there is plenty of gold up in that devil-magic country, but it is guarded by dead warriors who come to life when prospectors get near it. Mac and I and the rest of the boys saw the dead men dancing and we cleared out as fast as we could.'

'Do you mean to say that Mac ran away from anything, living or dead?' asked one of the other men.

'He did, Charlie. He said afterwards that he was not used to fighting dead warriors who used clubs and spiked spears—'

'Nonsense, Dick!' exclaimed the fourth man, and we saw that he wiped a tear from one of his eyes. 'Dead men can't fight, and if they are the only obstacle between us and that gold let us get there at once.'

'Yes!' cried my companion, as he turned round and faced the others, no longer able to restrain his excitement. 'We all know that Wolfram Dick has a very powerful imagination, but he sometimes speaks the truth, by accident. I move that we go and see his dancing dead men and the gold they guard—'

At that moment the lights were turned on and *our four old comrades* gazed at us in utter amazement !

'It's Big Sam !' yelled Wolfram Dick in delight, and bounding over to us he seized Sam by the waist and began prancing round the room with him in imitation of a corroboree dance. Then the others realised that we were actually before their eyes and rushed over to me, and before I could say anything my old friend Miserable Peter—the man with the afflicted eye—was hauling me round the room after Big Sam and Wolfram Dick. The Professor and Sydney Charlie tried for a time to restrain their feelings, but evidently their efforts were not successful, for when I got a chance to see them they were pounding along the floor together performing what looked like the Dance of Victory of returning head-hunters. . . .

It was a happy party of grown men, behaving as schoolboys, who sat down to dinner that night in the Townsville hotel. We were together again and nothing else mattered. Each man had much to tell and each tried to tell it at the same time. Big Sam and I forgot that we had been living on an island inside the Great Barrier Reef. The simple life had suddenly lost all attraction for us, and the fact that we had left all our few belongings on an isle of paradise gave us not a thought. In the morning we caught a steamer bound for New Guinea. We were going to make a try to see Wolfram Dick's dancing dead men and perhaps find a new goldfield. We had been the finders of more than one famous goldfield in the past and did not see why we should not be again.

We duly landed at Samarai, the commercial capital of New Guinea, and proceeded thence to a goldfield settlement we knew on the Mambare River, on the south-east coast. We found the camp-township very much the same as it always had been, but most of the men we had known had gone off to the new goldfields in the old German territory, and the conditions around had changed considerably. The once fierce, hostile natives in the vicinity had now become so civilised that they played cards, sang hymns and stole anything they found lying about anywhere if no owner were near.

We did not stay long in the Mambare camp, for, being told that Macrae's prospecting party was supposed to be somewhere amongst the unknown ranges near the Dutch border, we equipped ourselves as quickly as possible and, with half a dozen carrier 'boys,' set out to pick up his tracks. Macrae was our old comrade, known among his friends as 'Mac,' and we were overjoyed to know that he was

still in the country. True, he was in a very dangerous part of it, but he knew all the tapoo laws and customs of the various tribes of natives and had a knack of getting out of trouble as easily as most prospectors fell into it.

Travelling in New Guinea was much simpler and considerably less dangerous than when we had last crossed the country. Now that Australia exercised control from shore to shore the notorious fighting tribes on the old German border could no longer escape punishment for their misdeeds simply by crossing into foreign territory, and besides, the natives had come to learn that the white gold-seekers were not bad fellows. Forcing the pace somewhat at first, we soon got beyond the influence of the white man's civilisation, and then, disregarding native pads which led between villages, we cut our way through forest entanglements towards waterways which we knew led into the sky-piercing Owen Stanley ranges by shorter, though more laborious routes. Within a week we reached country which, as far as we knew, had not previously been trodden by white man. We found gold in most of the river sands we sampled, but not in quantity sufficient to induce us to linger, and being desirous only of tracking up Mac we did not proceed down and eastwards into the known auriferous land watered by the Markham River and its tributaries. We knew that land well, but we had been told that Mac had said he was going north, so, following a northerly flowing river, we eventually reached a densely timbered plateau connecting the Owen Stanley ranges with some peaks of another range we could see far ahead.

We were now in a country of vast mineral possibilities, but having determined to push on to the Sepik River in Dutch territory, unless we ran up against Mac before reaching it, we halted only long enough to break specimens from rich osmiridium formations or radium-containing uranium-oxide ores when we couldn't help seeing them, and continued our northerly journey. We had six carrier 'boys' with us and we trusted to them to smell the whereabouts of any village of hostile head-hunters, so that we could keep away from it. But avoiding villages was not always an easy matter, and we often made wide detours simply because we felt that we must carry the 'white man's burden.' In other words, we did not wish to give any natives a chance to provoke us into self-defence with our fire-arms. We had the idea, however, that we were playing the 'white man's burden' game too much and that we might be giving the natives—if any afterwards struck our tracks far away

from a village—the impression that we were avoiding them because we were afraid of them. Still, it was our duty to refrain from teaching the people of the interior of New Guinea that white men were *not* afraid of them, and although a sense of that duty had been the means of retarding our forward progress, we had not used our weapons except for procuring food. But we had thoughts of altering our methods!

One afternoon the Professor was in a somewhat worried mood: 'The Call of the Wilds may sound very attractive in the heart of a big city,' he said, irritably, 'but I don't think that the Wilds themselves are according to advertisement. I certainly don't like the big leeches, giant spiders, fly-like bees and ferocious mosquitoes that infest this part of them— Well, Tommy! What is the matter?' The latter words were addressed to our chief carrier boy who had suddenly come up from the rear; his face wore a grin which was intended to hide the fear he felt—but it didn't.

'More trouble, boss,' Tommy answered. 'Hims just catch eyes on warrior fellow in the tree branches over us. Hims preten' no' see him an' come to tell you. Warrior fellow is watching us an' will carry stories quickly to his village. Hims think warrior's village is not very far ahead—'

'We're too late to run away this time, Professor,' Wolfram Dick interrupted gleefully. 'I think you should get back to your own fellows, Tommy, and begin to say your prayers.'

'You did right to tell us, Tommy,' said the Professor, after some thought, while Miserable Peter, Big Sam, Sydney Charlie and I examined our shooting irons innocently. 'Gather the boys close in to us and instruct them to behave like their ancestors—they were brave men, I think—until further orders. We are going ahead, village or not.'

'I am of opinion that the straight-ahead plan is best, Professor,' said Miserable Peter, as a tear which might have misled those who didn't know him into thinking he was a 'Peace at any price' man welled in his affected eye.

'We'll not shoot unless it's absolutely necessary to do so, old man,' Big Sam added, and Sydney Charlie and I signified that we agreed with Sam's words. Wolfram Dick said nothing.

We had halted when Tommy had first made his appearance among us, but seeing that that individual was now instructing his comrades as to their conduct, in the rear, we resumed our forward progress. But we now took every precaution against being sur-

prised and kept the small river we had been following for some days on our left flank.

Gradually the forest became less dense, and before we had travelled far it had merged into a half-cultivated clearing through which we could see a village of some sort nestling in the bend of the river about half a mile distant. We expected trouble, of course, for we were certainly not invited guests, and to the people of the village ahead our party would seem like a gift from the gods, so that our heads might surmount stakes. Needless to say, we had not the slightest intention of allowing our heads to be elsewhere than where they were.

But they might have been, notwithstanding our objections, for, utterly unexpectedly, a number of fully armed natives—about fifty—who had been concealed in the ground vegetation jumped up and surrounded us, with acclamations which were unmistakably friendly. Although dumbfounded with surprise we did not show it, and responded to the kindly advances of the people as best we could, and presently we found ourselves being escorted to the village with all native honours. We could not understand the reason of our being received in such a manner. It was a bit different from that which we had anticipated and even Wolfram Dick was puzzled to account for it. Soon we entered the village and when we reached the Chief's hut the procession halted before it. The Chief himself—a gigantic warrior garbed in a fibre kilt, a necklet and armlet of shells and a feathered head-dress, but nothing more, unless the long bone ornament in his nose be considered an article of dress—then appeared from somewhere and informed us in a dialect we partly understood that we were freemen of his domain and that much dancing and feasting would take place in our honour. We were amazed still more with the Chief's words, but at that moment a box-like contrivance on the veranda of the hut began to make a peculiar yet familiar noise which resolved itself into the melody of 'Auld Lang Syne,' and at once all our puzzles were solved. It was Macrae's portable gramophone, and its presence proved that he had been in the village before us! He had managed to convince the people that the white gold-seekers were not bad fellows, and that would explain our welcome. But perhaps the people had taken the gramophone from him? An awful fear assailed me and I could see that the same thought had occurred to all the others.

'My fren' Mac gave me present of that devil-magic box,' began

the Chief, evidently sensing the nature of our thoughts, and now expressing himself in a kind of quaint English he seemed eager to air. 'He is my fren' now, an big Chief Kalo have promise him to be fren' of all white fellows always if they no' kill him's people.'

'Where is Mac now?' we all cried, in chorus.

'Oh, Mac no' very far away,' Chief Kalo replied, as he placed another record on the revolving disc. 'He away up an' down the mountains always look for gold. He come in to village when he want to send fast warrior with white fellow's talk (letter). You wait here an' p'r'aps he come soon. . . .'

But Mac did not come into the village while we waited there. We now knew, however, that he was somewhere in the vicinity and did not worry unduly. We were as safe in that village of Kalo's savages as we might be in Australia and had become very friendly with most of the chief warriors. Incidentally we learned that the original village of the people had been somewhere else, but that it had been abandoned long ago because of the great number of 'devils' who sometimes held high revelry in its Tapoo House. The people were afraid of those 'devils' and had abandoned the village in a body on that account. The old village had been swallowed up by tropical growths since then, but the Tapoo House was still standing, kept in order, doubtless, by the 'devils' themselves.

Of course, we did not pay much attention to the 'devil' part of the story, but as the Chief informed us the valley in which the old Tapoo House stood carried gold, we determined to see the place some day. Wolfram Dick, however, was greatly excited when he heard the story and declared that the old Tapoo House must be the same one that Mac and his party had run away from, the year before. 'There is more in the devil-magic of the New Guinean priests than is known by white men,' he said. 'Anyhow, the skeletons of dead warriors came to life in the Tapoo House we saw, and we didn't stay to get introduced. Keep away from old Tapoo Houses, mates, unless you want to see dead men living.'

'Well, it happens that we do want to see dead men dancing or doing anything they're not supposed to do, Wolfram,' Miserable Peter laughed, 'and maybe we'll run across that old Tapoo House while we are out prospecting for the gold said to be near it.'

We left the village next morning, having stayed there for four days, and, having been well directed where to go to find gold, were in the heart of the mountains next afternoon. Gold was everywhere in the sands of a little stream which flowed down from high

peaks, and, following the stream, we suddenly entered a gloomy, cup-shaped depression and saw before us the remnants of the old native village. There was not much of it left standing, but the erection in which were preserved the bones of the tribe's famous dead and other things which the priests had deemed worthy of being kept, commonly known as the Tapoo House, was almost intact. It was built out over the stream we had been following, on piles, and its thatched roof was surmounted by a huge, carved, red-and-white painted, wooden crocodile, to which the framework of wings was still attached. We knew that a mountain storm was impending, for black clouds had closed in over the valley, but thinking we did not need to mind for an hour or so we continued to inspect the outside of the Tapoo House, and it was not until a terrific peal of thunder reverberated throughout the entire valley and flashes of lightning zigzagged from peak to peak overhead that we realised we had now *no* time to look for shelter. A moment later rain poured down as if forced through a hose pipe, and—as a wetting meant fever—we pulled aside a mat in the wall of the Tapoo House which was on the bank of the stream and entered the place.

The interior was dark and a musty odour pervaded the apartment in which we found ourselves, but quickly lighting the floating wicks in the hanging coco-nut bowls which served for lamps we saw our surroundings. All of us had seen the inside of Tapoo Houses long ago and we were not particularly impressed with this one, although Wolfram Dick expressed himself as being certain that it was the very place he dreaded. Round the walls of the house were grouped the skeletons of ancient great chiefs and priests and warriors of Kalo's tribe's history. All were garbed in feathers and fibre as if alive, and held in their bony clutches spears, clubs, tubular drums, magic-working instruments of strange design, and other accessories denoting what had been their professions while in life, and fibrous strings of shell and sharks' teeth (how the latter came to be in an inland village occasioned us much thought), strange mineral specimens and gemstones of various colour adorned the bones forming their necks and arms.

'The so-called uncultured savages who reconstructed those skeletons were of a high artistic order, evidently,' the Professor commented, as we walked round the walls on a tour of inspection, conscious that the valley outside was now being deluged by a long-pent-up flood from the heavens. 'Note how those bones are all tied together almost invisibly with fine hair. I wonder, too, how the

artists managed to fit those coloured shells into the eye-sockets so cleverly? I see they are all fixed in some way with hair, too.'

'Well, we are evidently fixed here ourselves for the night,' I said. 'I can hear that the river underneath this floor is already rising with the storm waters rolling down from the mountains.'

We went back to the end of the house where we had entered, as the floor was less cluttered with bones there, and after looking out through the matted doorway and seeing the nature of the storm we sat down and dined on some food we had carried with us. We were thankful that we were under a roof of some kind and felt glad that, having left our carrier boys in the village, we had only ourselves to look after. It was now completely dark outside, so we made the best we could of our position and smoked, played cards, sang songs and told stories, and while still early in the night, stretched ourselves out on the hard, split-bamboo floor to sleep. The lightning flashed, the thunder roared and the rain fell, but we were fairly comfortable and did not care. In fact, if Mac had been with us we should have enjoyed the sensation; we hoped he was under shelter at the moment, somewhere, and were amused at the idea that even he might get caught by a sudden mountain storm. The last thing of which I was sensible before sleep came to me was that the water flowing under the house now sounded like a raging torrent.

Some time in the night I awoke and, sitting up, thought I had reached the place I had heard about in Sunday School days where some people eventually go. I was in a weirdly lit hall, gazing at an array of skeletons in front of me dancing, rolling eyes, shaking and poising clubs and spears, and beating out erratic tattoos on snake-skin-covered drums.

'The dead have come to life!' I heard someone say, and I knew it was Sydney Charlie who spoke.

'What did I tell you?' cried Wolfram Dick's voice.

'Dear me! How very extraordinary!' another voice muttered, and then I realised that I was in the old Tapoo House and that my comrades were sitting beside me.

'You needn't shoot, mates,' whispered Wolfram Dick. 'You can't make dead men any deader.'

'I'll try the effect of a bullet anyhow,' gritted Big Sam, raising his rifle. He fired one shot, and as a result a necklace of shells fell from the bony neck of a priest and scattered all over the floorway. But the priest kept on beating time in a strange one-foot dance

as if nothing had happened, though his red eyes flashed in their sockets. Peter and I then blazed out together and I heard our bullets hitting the bones of the dancing 'things' we aimed at, but the only effect was that some bones clattered to the floor from their proper anatomical position in the dancers and all the spear-throwers levelled their elevated weapons at us and drew them backwards over their shoulders once or twice, as if to take better aim at us before launching them on their mission. But by this time we were all fully awake to our position and all began emptying revolvers at the skeleton figures with an accompaniment of words not found in any dictionary. When the smoke cleared we saw that one skull had fallen to the floor, though the headless warrior went on shaking his spear as before, a great many bones were dislodged from their places, a priest had lost a shell eye he had been rolling ferociously, but he didn't seem to mind, and in general all the skeleton-men looked as if they were impervious to bullets. We all fired again with our spare revolvers but with no better results from our point of view, and we were now all bathed in perspiration.

'I don't mind fighting any kind of living men, in the day's work,' gasped Big Sam, as he hastily reloaded his first revolver, 'but fighting dead men who won't lie down when their bones drop out has got me beat.'

'We've been trapped!' cried the Professor. 'This is native magic of some kind. Those men are not dead at all!'

'Come on, mates!' yelled Wolfram Dick. 'They'll get us in a minute! We can't fight them!' He leaped through the matted doorway of the house as he spoke, and without waiting to give the dead men another fusillade we all jumped to our feet and followed him.

The storm had now ceased and the strange mountain valley was bathed in moonlight. I have no doubt the scene was beautiful, but I ran with my comrades down the river-bank the way we had come and certainly I did not pause to admire any scenic beauty!

As the sun rose we staggered into the village of our native friends and soon after were resting in our own camp with our own carrier boys on guard. They would not be of much use, of course, but they could at least warn us if danger threatened. Personally I went to sleep and I believe so did some of the others, but we were all galvanised into wakefulness suddenly when a well-known voice beside us drawled: 'Is this the right way to welcome an old

friend in the interior of savage New Guinea ? Get up, you lazy sinners ! ”

‘ Mac ! ’ We yelled in unison as we sprang to our feet and gaped at the intruder in startled surprise.

‘ We came here to find you, Mac,’ the Professor at length articulated, grasping his hand, and we others formed round the ever-debonair gentleman and expressed our joy in seeing him, in characteristic fashion.

‘ Well, boys, the sight of your ugly old faces is mighty pleasant to me,’ Mac said, when he got a chance to speak. ‘ But we haven’t time to say much, now. A lot of white men are near here and they’re looking for trouble. We’ve got to interfere at once or Kalo will kill them.’

‘ We’re with you, Mac,’ Big Sam chimed in. ‘ What have the white fellows been doing ? ’

‘ Oh, some shooting,’ replied Mac. ‘ They did a lot of damage in an old abandoned Tapoo House up the river, which will make the priests fighting mad.’

‘ But did not the—er—inhabitants of that Tapoo House give them cause ? ’ asked the Professor, mildly, gazing round upon our faces, with not a sign upon his own.

‘ Maybe, but they couldn’t help themselves. You see, I was caught in that storm of last night and I ran for shelter to that old museum of a house. I got there after most of the storm had passed, worse luck, and as the lights were burning I thought the priests had gone there to see about things, and knowing that they would not care for my presence I lay down in a dark corner and slept. But it seems the visitors were white men and not priests, for I was awokened by their artillery in action. They were shooting at the animated figures and some of their shots just missed me.’

‘ Animated ! ’ someone put in.

‘ Yes ; their joints and bones are all connected with hair, which in turn is tied to a rope which passes through the floor of the house. On that rope is hung a log which is at rest normally. When a storm comes along, though, the flood-waters of the mountains rise in the gully and catch the log. Then, naturally it is swayed about by the torrent and as a result the skeletons in the house above become animated as if in life. Wolfram Dick and I saw them last year and were scared out of our senses, but, after a bit, I concluded the moving dead men were some kind of native magic and came back to find out all about it.’

'Oh!' I ejaculated.

'Perhaps the white visitors were scared, too?' murmured Miserable Peter.

'I hope they were,' smiled Mac. 'Anyhow, there is another thing I want to talk about. Kalo has just told me that a native runner has arrived from some place or other and has brought some Australian papers for my benefit. In them I see that a new silver find has been made in the new State of North Australia, so I vote that we all make tracks for that part of the world at once.'

'Yes; anywhere for the simple life,' said Big Sam. 'I know where a good stew is waiting for us down in Australia. It must surely be cooked well enough now.'

Next morning we started on the back track and landed in Australia ten days later; but, as the train from Townsville for the nearest point to the new silver find left that evening, we never even saw the overcooked stew Big Sam and I had left on our island of the Great Barrier Reef.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

LUPINS :—Mrs. Marion Cran wishes it made clear that she by no means agrees with the view expressed by Miss W. M. Letts in her article 'With Silver Bells and Cockle Shells' in the October issue. Miss Letts had gathered that for Mrs. Cran lupins were 'flowers without memory or poetry.' Mrs. Cran would like it known that in the *Garden of Ignorance* (first published in 1913) and in all her ten garden books she has not expressed, as far as she is aware, any such insensitiveness, but on the contrary has always loved and praised lupins for their grace and beauty. In *The Story of My Ruin*, for example, she advocated a village of lupins and in the *Garden of Experience* gave groupings of iris with colour harmonies of lupins. The lupin, therefore, has in both writers stanch advocates and friends.—*Editor.*

COSMIC JEST.

BY ALAN GRIFF.

THE Lefton Asylum for Women stands quite alone on the fish-shaped hill that overlooks Rushley. When the nights are clear its windows can be seen from the valley, glowing faintly, like a patch of dim scales, but under blue skies and spring winds it stands with the air of an old manor dreaming among its trees. It is a long rambling building, not content with its own size, that runs in the fashion of such places to additional outhouses, staff quarters, a chapel, isolation wards, a tiny laundry, a garage, and the like. And remarkable in the midst of these grey stone afterthoughts is a great space of level earth, where nothing grows, and which is never crossed by staff or visitor, not even by cat or bird. It was here that Dr. Dunwich had his laboratory in the strange days before the war.

He was a brilliant man, admired by the most brilliant. Cambridge gave him its honours, Vienna its plaudits. The Royal Society approved him, Harley Street quoted his conclusions stupendously amid its velvet pomp, and the Royal Household itself had a benevolent eye upon his future. But unexpectedly, in the very flow of his career, the good Dr. Dunwich abandoned everything, applied for the position at Lefton, and disappeared into the country as a mere medico anxious to tend and ease the poor half-crazed women who from all quarters knock upon the door of the famous asylum. The truth was that Dr. Dunwich had a secret sore. He was a freethinker, a profound questioner of the idea of God, and it was for this reason alone that he left London and turned from the society of folk likely to embark upon religious dispute. A year of country peace delighted him, a second year made him bold, and in the third his defence had become perfect. His mind could close like an iron door upon repulsive moments and disturbing approaches. He began to invite friends to Lefton, then young men who interested him, and after another year he deliberately sought out people who roused his fine sense of ridicule. In time, too, he grew intolerant of the details of asylum worship. He upset everyone by abolishing grace before meat. He silenced the chapel

organ. He insisted that all Sunday services should be spoken, and be spoken as quietly as possible ; and at last came the terrible night when he queried the need for a priest to a dying patient.

He did not change in manner. Throughout his attack he was the same courteous man, with kind eyes and a clipped beard, with long delicate fingers and an utterly charming voice. The patients loved him, in their own quarters the nurses all referred to him as Bill ; and one woman quite idolised him, poor Hannah Cam, who had been an inmate of the asylum for so long that she was considered harmless and acted now as a sort of major-domo, ordering the men's dining-table with an air of rapt and foolish interest. Hannah's face might have been designed waggishly with a set-square, so straight were her brows and mouth, so flat her nose, so square her cheeks and chin. She wore a bun of hair at the nape of her neck which at least contrived to be oblong, and she would stand motionless throughout the meals watching Dr. Dunwich's every action with love and awe and humility. For a long time, indeed, everyone was in the habit of watching his actions so. Only the doctors of the staff had doubts, for one day over lunch he had taken the trouble to tell them, very fully and very accurately, his low opinion of God. He spoke with his usual charm, it is true, but he had grown tactfully splenetic as he went on. God, he implied, was man's invented refuge from curiosity and from primitive fear. Whatever man did not understand, he ascribed to God : wherever man was called to put forth effort or to sacrifice ease, he threw his burden on the unknown : whenever he was stricken by horrid fear, he gazed up whimpering to the skies. Now such conduct, proceeded Dr. Dunwich from his vantage-point at the head of the table, disgraced man's own intimations of immortality. But whence came the intimations of immortality, the staff doctors broke in, if not from God ? And that set the good doctor aflame with information.

He spread his argument out through days. At every meal he brought it back until the men were weary. He declared that mankind was the creation of a force which he called the Life Desire, a force akin to electricity but raised to unspeakably higher powers. This was the prime cause, a creative current ruling stars and holding universes but just as constantly groping to understand itself. Dr. Dunwich instanced the huge and clumsy and comic sauria of the Mesozoic Age, the Stegosaurus, the Diplodocus, as the Life Desire's first serious attempt to deal with organic matter. They vanished

swiftly, as though the force was repelled by its own failure, and in their place came man. Through man the Life Desire was struggling to see, through man a purpose might be given to blindness. . . .

'Dearie !' the queer Hannah Cam burst out at this point. 'What germs you doctors *do* invent ! Diplococcus !' she repeated several times, as if savouring the word on her tongue, and tittered alarmingly.

'Be quiet, Hannah,' Dr. Dunwich said. And, 'She is very human,' he added to the table in general. 'The unexpected makes her laugh when it should merely make her weep. The Diplodocus perished on the edge of dismal swamps before ever time began, and man will go the same way if he fails creation's need.'

The staff men glanced from one to another, fidgeted with the table napkins, attempted to break through to other subjects. But the good doctor was irresistible.

'How much longer will you take refuge behind religious fable ?' he demanded, blandly crescendo. 'Gentlemen, how much longer will you leave thought to emotion ?'

A new doctor came to Lefton at the climax of these talks, a compact tight-lipped little man, intensely aggressive behind black spectacles. He listened in wonder until the end of his first meal, and then he very quietly asked if evidence of such a force could be found anywhere in the human body. There was silence all down the table, a hush before the new man's temerity ; and suddenly Dr. Dunwich stunned everyone by replying that there was evidence, and that moreover it was possible to separate manifestations of the force in laboratory tests.

'You believe that you have stumbled on the secret of life, sir ?' the compact little man demanded.

'It is more than my belief, Dr. Ring,' the other answered, nodding his head at the cheese. 'And may I add that I do not delight in your use of the word "stumbled" ?'

Dr. Ring was all apology. 'But really, sir !' he cried at last. 'The discovery of life itself in a meagre private lab——'

'My laboratory is efficient, every bit as well equipped as any in England,' Dr. Dunwich retorted with some dignity. 'And why your alarm ? Newton needed no more than an apple in a sunny orchard.'

A second hush swept down the table. When every drum in the band is thumped a general deafness is natural.

'Newton's rusticity anticipated me at least in that,' Dr. Dunwich added serenely. 'Pass the water-cress.'

From that day he harangued the doctors of his staff no more, but he was less interested in his duties, less kind to the poor half-crazed women who looked for him each morning. Hannah Cam declared that he was ill, and pestered the staff men to give him medicine. He shut himself away in his laboratory, working there feverishly, coiling endless wire, clinking long test-tubes, or poring deep in his notebooks often without moving for hours. Outside he could hear the minutiae of unresting life, the bleating of sheep on the slopes below the asylum, the drool of the wind, the lisping of leaves, the conversational chirrup of birds. Sometimes runners used the road, thinly clothed men, stooping forward as they ran, lean and sinewy, with muscular legs, with lightly closed fists and arms partly raised; but they passed the laboratory like worried ghosts, soundless and never returning. Poor Dr. Dunwich would stare desperately after them from his meditation, as though they came in taunting evidence of the force he struggled to find. He trod the floor of his battery room, to and fro, to and fro, his mind beating against the bars of human limitation.

At last one night, with the flutter of an escaped bird, he sprang to his conclusions. Before him in a Leyden jar the thing was happening. Bluish vapour could be discerned through the glass upper third, fierce crimson sparks snarled below the wooden stopper. Dr. Dunwich had the impression that fire was flickering about his legs, that his heart had redoubled its rhythm, that his hearing and sight were superbly acute. He flung a wavering defensive arm between himself and the jar, and with that a puff arose from the bench and he perceived that one of his supply batteries had fallen to dust. He did not cry out. He realised vaguely that his capture must emerge from something, and exhilaration put away surprise. He leaned over and studied the manifestations in the jar, gazed in a fury of concentration. He did not know how long he stood there. His brain seemed to glow with an intensity altogether outside human experience, and in a while he heard himself repeating 'Use! Use! It must be put to use!' The voice was sharp and hard, quite unlike his own, and presently he found himself prowling round the room, still madly repeating 'Use! Use! It will not wait!'

All the contents of the laboratory were stone or glass or liquid or metal, and even his inspired perception could find no use for inorganic material. He was about to open the door, to go in

ghoulish search, when the mewing of a cat shook him with delight. He went to the window. ‘Puss, puss ! Choo ! Puss !’ The animal saw him at once and leapt with sweet grace to the sill. He knew her well. She was Dusky, the asylum ratter, a cold and unfriendly creature at most times but now purring tumultuously, rubbing her head against his sleeve, and sniffing as though he contemplated an offering of fish. Did some hint of the Life Desire hang about him, the doctor wondered, conveying an ecstasy as of food to the cat ? He dismissed the obscure problem. He shut the window, walked across to his bench, closely followed by the elate animal, and a moment later he had struck her to the heart. The furry body lay motionless between batteries, the night outside fell still.

Watch in hand, the doctor waited. He was determined that a quarter of an hour should elapse before he put his capture to use. The minutes ticked on and it seemed that the whole laboratory was intent on that prone black creature sleeping in death before giving her testimony of death’s impotence. Awful thoughts swept through the doctor’s mind. He pinned his attention to the watch in terror of the things which lured him, racing with the seconds hand as a man eager for rescue. The time passed and he inserted his wires. For an instant longer nothing moved, then he saw that the extreme tip of Dusky’s tail was flickering, that her eyelids fluttered. Once more the crimson sparks snapped, yet again the wires shuddered, and behold the cat had twisted round and sprung up ! She scouted, tail erect, about the dim place ; she mewed thrice with an extraordinary effect of awe, and suddenly she paused by the high window and looked up at the moon.

Dr. Dunwich held his step. A bewildering change was taking place in the animal. She sank her head twice to the ground and twice raised it again to the shining orb. Her mewing became continuous and the doctor saw with thickening horror that she was rising and sinking on her paws for all the world like some worshipper in an Oriental temple. Was—was the cat worshipping the moon ? Could worship, after all, be a waste product of the Life Desire ? Dr. Dunwich rushed forward to drive the animal from the window, but he was met by so hellish a snarl that he winced back. He clapped his hands loudly, pushed the furry belly with his foot. A savage paw shot out and when it was withdrawn a weal of leather had risen on the shining toe-cap.

The good doctor was confounded. All the next morning he sat

in his room before a pile of asylum papers, and pondered. Was he to conclude that an overcharge of the force induced a state of religious abandon in the lower forms of life ? And how was he to reconcile that with the detested human reactions toward devotion ? He leaned upon the desk, his head in his hands, far from the popular conception of an expert whose work had been crowned by success, his brain writhing in agony. He fell to picturing an impossible world should his discovery get out of control, a world of sentimental cats, moody horses, maddened birds, hunting packs of zeal-bitten dogs. Man alone was sufficiently developed to take the charge, and even that theory had yet to be proved. He cast about for means of human experiment, but his tired brain could suggest nothing, and it was whilst he was thus lost in gloom that the telephone bell rang. He took the receiver from its hook, said 'Yes?' in an absent sort of tone, and abruptly flashed into activity, for the Rushley police were asking the loan of an asylum doctor. A labourer had fallen in the street with some sharp heart trouble, all local doctors were out of call, and the request for a Lefton man came to Dr. Dunwich like the ram to Abraham. He ordered his car, packed his simple apparatus, and within five minutes he was coasting downhill behind the neat liveried chauffeur.

The world was very beautiful that morning. Summer was so young that the sunshine seemed a handful of gold-dust thrown into the air. Rabbits peered from the hedgerows, and over the fold of the hillside their ears could be seen like twin brown pods. Blue-bells spread their carpets beneath the trees, though many were thrown down forlorn in the dust of the road ; birds positively shouted delight, and the meadows were deep and rich with grass.

He came to the labourer's cottage. A Roman priest was standing by the window, for Dr. Dunwich was too late. The man had confessed and made a good end, and his wife and daughter were weeping copiously and loudly under the priest's kind words. Up the clattering wind of the stairs went the doctor, alone to the still death-room. There was no mistake. The labourer had spent himself in a vigorous life and Angina Pectoris had felled him. A sense of shattering triumph swept over the Lefton man. In his Leyden jar life was imprisoned : now he could raise those who were fallen, bring comfort to those who mourned, shake aloft man's conquering banner. The crimson sparks danced and snapped, once more he was aware of energy surging all about him, but this time a voice cried through the silence.

'God! God! God! Give praise! Give praise!'

It was the labourer, transfigured, sitting up in bed, his voice enormous.

'Gently, gently,' Dr. Dunwich said, scandalised. 'You must lie very still. You are not yet out of danger. I must warn you not to speak.'

But the labourer roared on, springing out of bed, manifestly aglow with health. 'Give praise! Give praise! I have passed out of the jaws of death and return now to testify!'

Murmurs came up from below, little startled squeaks could be heard, footsteps clattered on the stairs. Dr. Dunwich had barely time to put away his apparatus before the locked door was shaken and the priest was shouting enquiries in a state of prodigious glee.

Through the day the doctor was plagued by congratulations. He fled to his hill-top, but the telephone bell rang and the callers multiplied. The Rushley men, Dr. Shaw, Dr. Wells, and Dr. Buncombe, sent their cards in swift succession. The *Rushley Herald* demanded an interview. The *Daily This* and the *Daily That* threatened to send men by the very first train from London and it appeared that the whole district was a-twitter with Dr. Dunwich's miracle. Hannah Cam grew terribly excited. She went everywhere at a sort of fussy trot, saying that she always knew her man was a wonder, and calling upon folk to 'stop going in and out like a fiddler's elbow.' The labourer himself was driven by a grocer to the asylum gates. The staff men, despite Hannah's protest, led him to the chief with a tremendous sense of the wrath to come. But no wrath came. The modern Lazarus preached in vain, for the chief would not see him. He was asked to leave; and that night everyone waited eagerly at table for the coming of Dr. Dunwich.

He arrived, pale and dignified. He took his chair and drank soup with a painful pretence that nothing had occurred.

'We are to congratulate you, sir,' Dr. Ring began presently, forcing his words through a stiff silence. 'We had no idea you had pushed so far with your research.'

Dr. Dunwich bowed.

'This religious ecstasy, sir,' the spectacled man pursued: 'surely you had no—'

'Hell and devils, Dr. Ring!' yelled the infuriated Dunwich. 'Will you not be silent?'

'It seems the man was an incurable roysterer, sir. He was known all over the town as Dick Dirty Tongue, but after your

treatment he has become a model saint. They say a special service is to be held this evening and that he is to be presented——'

'If my discovery brings piety yet more into the world——' Dr. Dunwich cried, and stood up horror-stricken. For a second he mouthed, voiceless, then he crashed his soup plate full into the centre of the table and rushed from the room.

In the laboratory he sat like a man turned to stone. The Leyden jar was at his back, a thing abhorred, an enigma, gone suddenly dull, its sparks feeble. It did not contain that in which the doctor had always believed. It held the good old breath of life, it held piety and love, it contained a portion of God. And Dr. Dunwich was by no means converted to God. He sat there long after Dr. Ring and his compact enquiries had faded from the mind, he sat whilst evening died and the stars appeared, the helpless infuriated victim of some cosmic jest. He reviewed each detail of the experiment, the blue vapour and the awful first flashes, the falling to dust of a battery, the cat's fervour, and the vast unanswered voice of the labourer. What could he do now? Darkness gathered about him. A beam of moonlight fell across the pane and moved imperceptibly up his knees. He heard the faint chinking and rattling and footfalls of the asylum preparing for sleep. On the road outside a late car purred and passed.

And then, very gently, very softly in the hours of night, a rapping came upon his window. He rose and opened it, to find the queer Hannah Cam standing there, her eyes large with compassion.

'My poor man,' she murmured, 'my poor dearie: have they tormented you? Will they not leave you peace?'

An unwonted tenderness swept over the doctor. 'I am all right,' he answered quietly. 'You know you ought to be in bed, Hannah. It is getting cold now.'

She drew nearer and peered suspiciously over his shoulder into the gloom. 'They say,' she began with an unexpected diffidence, 'they say you have caught him here.'

'Caught whom, Hannah?'

'Caught God in a pot,' the peculiar lady replied. 'Do be gentle of him, dearie,' she went on, a world of beseeching in her voice. 'He is very kind to us old women.'

'You mean that his name brings idle comfort to your thoughts,' Dr. Dunwich cruelly retorted. 'He doesn't exist, you know. It would be better if you faced life for yourself.'

'How can I, dearie? I'm only an old lunatic.'

'Your mind would grow strong if you would use it, Hannah.'

In his emotion Dr. Dunwich thrust his head a little out of the open window, and with a start of horror he saw that she was hugging the cat and that the animal's eyes were still intent on the sky.

'The cat!' he shouted, with a swift reversion to anger, shrill in the stillness. 'Why do you nurse that idiotic cat?'

'Why, because I love her, dearie. She and I look up at the stars and the moon, and we have such comfort together.'

'Comfort, ease, avoidance!' Dr. Dunwich cried. 'Is life so dreadful that you all need comfort? Go away, woman! Go to your bed now!'

He heard her weeping, but he slammed the window; and a long time he sat in shame for the memory of his outburst. He got up at last to look for her, but the poor woman had gone and only an owl hooted through the dark.

Night took him again, queer dimness and silence and patient probing thought. He began to discern a fault in all that he had done. Hitherto he had used the force solely upon the dead, a cheap and melodramatic expression of so high a power. If he were to use it upon a living frame, might he not achieve the answer he desired? Dr. Ring! Dr. Ring! The personality of Dr. Ring came before him. How would that aggressive mind take impulse? What admissions and revelations might not pour from those tight lips if he could be imbued with higher life? Dr. Dunwich hugged himself with delight of the idea. He stole cautiously towards the asylum, bearing his little Leyden jar. He crept upstairs and down corridors just as light was touching the sky. Dr. Ring's door stood open—he was a fresh-air devotee—and with held breath the scientist slipped in and did his work. Dr. Ring did not stir. He lay with a beatific smile upon his face until Dr. Dunwich had got clean out of the room, but as he fled down the dreadful corridor Dr. Dunwich heard sounds. He heard the bed creak violently, and words of wonder, and soon, loud, unmistakable, joyous, the first notes of a hymn.

It was the end. He, William Ross Dunwich, convinced and implacable atheist, had snared divinity in a Leyden jar. He felt like a Nihilist awakened in Heaven. It was as though he had put out his hand for a scalpel and found a crucifix. But he did not believe! He would never believe! If the cosmic force could only sing Hallelujah, it would be necessary for man to fight the force!

He could still rebel. He could still rebel. He got to the laboratory and with a terrific crash hurled the jar upon the floor.

'Go!' he screamed. 'Not through me shall you enter the world! Smash and scatter and go back to your limbo! Man yet shall outlive your fumbling inanity, your cheap miserable ecstasies! Go!'

Immediately he felt himself rising. The Leyden jar was empty and he was floating a couple of feet from the laboratory floor, his arms outstretched in the manner of a cross. Voices rang in his ears, a golden light was in his eyes. He heard himself singing and knew that his duty was clear. He soared with pious ejaculations toward the bench. He took down four Leyden jars and connected them with his separator, fully determined that more of the holy stuff should be made and a whole world blessed by it. Energy began to creep about him, to surge in the air, to fill the good doctor with perception. Sunshine poured through the window, causing glass to sparkle like diamonds, suggesting gold and ivory and precious stones wherever he looked. Birds chirruped in an anthem. Higher mounted the power of the force, setting the laboratory a-hum, lifting Dr. Dunwich beyond thoughts even of God. He saw that God was but the simplification of a vaster reality, man's child-name for that which he himself worshipped. He sang louder and with gladness. 'Holy! Holy! Holy!' he declared.

But something was worrying his brow. He put up his hand and found that dust was on his hair. Dust was all about him, flying softly and sweetly like a fall of snow. As the jars gathered their spark the very laboratory was turning to ashes, as his battery had turned on the first night. Daylight smote through the vanished roof. The walls crumbled away in utter silence and soon every particle of the place, apparatus, bench, and the good doctor himself, had gone, leaving level earth. Alone in the morning light four puffs of bluish vapour mounted and mounted—to be lost in the blue of the sky.

COBLE FISHING.

BY URSULA KENTISH WRIGHT.

WE are all busy in the village, for winter fishing is in full swing. That is, line fishing for cod and haddock. This fishing village lies on the north-east coast, and the fishermen's cottages are built huddled together on the face of the cliff, which shelters them from the north winds, so that in the little gardens roses bloom all through the winter. Narrow steps and a rough path form the only road through the village, and it is so steep that as I stand on the doorstep of my cottage I can warm my hands over the chimney-pot of the cottage below. Looking down between the red roofs I can see the bay, where gulls are circling the rocks and crying hungrily, and one black cormorant with his great wings sweeps low over the waves, as the tide races in.

In olden days every trade and craft had its distinctive dress, but nowadays fishermen are the only workers who still wear the traditional dress of their calling, not only at their work but on high days and holidays. Their dress consists of a blue cloth coat and dark trousers, and a blue knitted jersey with a coloured hand-kerchief knotted round the neck. There is a great rivalry between this and the next village, four miles up the coast, which even extends to the knitting of patterns in the jerseys. Our neighbours knit 'cables' and a variety of elaborate patterns into their jerseys, but here we scorn such useless ostentation, and know that our plain jerseys are proof of finer seamanship. When the men go out in the boats they wear leather or rubber sea-boots which come right up their thighs, with oilskins (known as 'barmskins') and sou'westers. The women wear cotton bonnets winter and summer; these are of a different pattern to the old-fashioned country sun-bonnet; the fisher-bonnet has a goffered frill over the crown, and the strings are tied in a bow behind the head which makes the bonnet secure in a high wind.

On this coast the fishing boats, which are of a very ancient design, are called cobles—pronounced 'cobbles' in Yorkshire and 'cōbles' in Northumberland. A coble is a flat-bottomed boat about thirty feet long, with a high sharp bow and a square stern.

It has three keels ; a big centre keel starting at the bow and ending amidships ; and two small keels running one on either side, from where the centre keel ends to the stern. The rudder is very deep, extending considerably below the stern. It is easy to trace the origin of the coble from the flat prehistoric ‘dug-out,’ a boat hollowed out of a tree-trunk and propelled by paddles, the later influence of the Viking boats can be seen in the addition of a high prow—the square stern and flat bottom being retained. It carries a lug-sail which has the disadvantage of having to be ‘dipped’ or lowered on every tack, there is no boom, and the mainsheet is not made fast but held in the hand. It is not necessary to ship the oars while the men are busy with the lines, as each oar is attached to the boat by an iron ring hung over a single iron ‘thowl’ pin. The coble is a fast and strong craft built to withstand a ‘wild’ sea. Of recent years the cobles have been fitted with motor engines, which are a great advantage in turning the boats quickly, and in shooting and hauling in the lines ; also the engines add greatly to the safety of the fishermen, as in a sudden squall they can return to land with a rapidity which was impossible when they were dependent on their sail and oars.

During the present season of long-line fishing three men go out in each coble, which carries six or eight lines. Each line is six hundred yards long, and is baited with mussels. The baiting is a tremendous task as four hundred and fifty hooks have to be baited on each line, that is, two thousand seven hundred hooks for six lines per boat, or three thousand six hundred hooks for eight lines per boat.

The oldest and most important fisherman in the village, formerly coxswain of the lifeboat, gets up at half-past four every morning, and walks round the village knocking up all the other fishermen ; they then turn out and look at the weather and the sea, and if it is fit to go out they help each other to launch the cobles, and are away by five o’clock. Soon afterwards the women set about ‘skeaning,’ that is, shelling the mussels, which they put in large tubs of water ready for baiting. This is a very tiring and hard job, for the shells are rough to the hands, and it needs great skill to do it at the necessary speed without gashing the hands with the knife.

About noon the boats are sighted making for home, and word is shouted up the village that the cobles are coming in.

‘Hey, Meg ! Thy boat’s coomin’ noo.’

'They're owre soon, I haen't finished ma skeaning.'

'Betsy, they're in—is ta coomin' ?'

'Aye, when a've put t'pan on t'fire.'

The boats are in and being hauled up the slips. The women climb down to the beach, picturesque in their coloured pinnafores and print bonnets. There is a good catch to-day, several cod each weighing five or six stone, a number of haddock, and a large 'poog' (the local name for a monk fish), a fish which bears an absurd resemblance to a pug-dog with its wrinkled nose and black skin. The fish are washed and sorted and packed for market, then the men lift the lines—already coiled on wicker 'skeps'—on to the women's heads, and the procession winds up the hill again. The lines are a great weight and it is no easy matter to climb a path of slippery clay with one balanced on your head. I am proud to say I have accomplished this without tripping and rolling down the cliff and over the sea wall. But I must admit I was very breathless when I reached the top, and was put to shame by an old lady over seventy who carried up three lines, one after the other, without turning a hair.

Oilskins and boots hung out to dry—dinner over—the baiting is begun for the next day, and everyone is hard at it till late in the evening. In one small cottage living-room as many as six men and women will be at work on the lines. It is a cheerful room, at one end is the open cooking range where there is always a big fire piled up the chimney. The hearth and mantelshelf glitter with brasses; candle-sticks, trivets, fire-dogs, and brass ornaments of every shape and size. At the front of the room is the window looking over the sea, and at the back are three doors; the centre one is the staircase and on either side are store places built into the wall. All the woodwork is painted a bright green, and it is a point of honour with the fisherpeople to paint their cottages inside and out every year before Whitsuntide. Lack of space compels them to be remarkably tidy and methodical over their work; as the cooking, and the meals, and the washing up, and the baiting takes place in the one room, there would be chaos if they didn't clean and put away each thing immediately it was done with. The work is further complicated by the fact that there is no water laid on in the cottages, and it all has to be carried in buckets from the village spring.

Soon the lamps are lit, and the baiting still goes on. Five lines are finished, only four hundred more hooks to bait. When

the last mussel is put on the last hook the tables are scrubbed with boiling water, the rugs shaken, the mussel-tubs emptied, and in five minutes the room is as neat again as the proverbial new pin.

Although times are hard and it is difficult to get a bare living no one looks worried or discontented. One hears laughter everywhere, for there is contented companionship between the men and women, a sympathy welded by hardship and ever-present danger. Apart from the dangers which the men run every day at their fishing, on dark stormy nights they are liable to be called out in the lifeboat, for wrecks are common on this rocky coast. Launching a lifeboat is a tricky business in broad daylight and in calm weather, but on a pitch-dark night with a seventy-mile-an-hour gale blowing, it needs tremendous skill and courage to get the lifeboat through the breakers; and when it has disappeared into the darkness the women watch and wait hour after hour all through the night, till the dawn breaks and they know the fate of their men. So these people live their free unselfish lives disciplined by the sea.

This race of fishermen will soon die out unless prompt measures are taken to protect all the branches of the inshore fishing industry, similar to those already undertaken to restore the herring trade. Fishermen are not covered by the Unemployment Insurance Acts, there is consequently a great deal of hardship when the weather is too rough for the boats to go out to sea, and the men are unable to earn anything for weeks at a time. They also suffer severely from loss of gear, for in a stormy night one boat may lose its whole fleet of seventy lobster pots.

The industry requires a subsidy to buy new boats and gear, and to make provision for the men in bad weather. Also the fish market needs regulating so that a larger percentage of profit goes to the fishermen, who take most of the risk.

It would be a great national loss if this little race of inshore fishermen is allowed to die out. They are a unique people—descendants of the men who sailed their little wooden ships across uncharted seas—with the hardy and dauntless characteristics which have built up our island strength.

A CASE FOR THE LOCUM.

BY ESSEX HOPE.

IT had been snowing while the doctor was with his patient, and when he came out of the cottage into the small garden with its crumbling stone wall, the hillside seemed to drop away beneath sheer as a white precipice. ‘A lonely place,’ he thought, ‘no wonder the girl’s nervous——’ and he looked back to give her a reassuring nod. At the same moment, she made a sudden step forward, clutched his arm and said huskily :

‘ You’ll come, doctor ? Directly they send, you’ll come ? ’

‘ Of course I’ll come,’ he answered briskly, but still searching his face with her dark eyes she whispered :

‘ Swear you’ll come. Swear it ! ’

For a moment the locum felt annoyed—he wasn’t in the habit of having his word doubted—but the next instant, looking again into the girl’s eyes, he took her hand in his strong young grasp, and holding it, said gravely :

‘ I swear I’ll come,’ and at once relief swept over Jane Griffith’s face like sunshine over some pale landscape. She smiled, and stood watching him down the snow-covered path, and when at the gate, he turned to put back the frayed rope fastening, she was still standing there, her black dress intensified by the whitewash of the two cottages in the background.

‘ It’s lucky,’ thought the locum, ‘ that old woman lives next door. The girl ought to go to the hospital——’ and yet he could not help sympathising with her stubborn determination that the child should be born in the cottage where she and her husband had spent their short married life. ‘ Tragic,’ he thought, ‘ the chap should have been run over like that ; there seems little enough traffic about here . . . ’ and he looked down at the empty road, which wound along the grey riverside until it appeared to lose itself in the immensity of the snow-clad hills. A lonely part, indeed ; and at first the young doctor hadn’t cared for his job, but after awhile he felt himself growing oddly attached to this wild border-country—‘ And under snow,’ he thought, ‘ it’s beautiful,’ for now, as he raised his eye to the slopes of distant Cader Idris the

green lights upon them deepened to rose, and then to crimson. For a few moments he stood there, watching, until the beauty of the sunset light had faded and the mountain-tops became a cold pale blue ; then he walked on quickly, for snow was beginning to fall again, soft as moth's wings against his face. The day's round was nearly over ; a couple more patients to see in the village, then dinner, and a solitary evening, unless Lewis, the bailiff, dropped in for a pipe and a drink. 'I hope he will,' thought the doctor, who liked to hear the old chap yarn, and to see his deepset little eyes twinkle over some odd tale of the countryside that might have taken De Maupassant's fancy. Then his thoughts went back to the cottage on Merebury Hill, and to the terror in Jane Griffith's eyes. He frowned—yes, she ought to have gone to the hospital.

That night, as he had hoped, the bailiff came in after dinner. They sat over the log fire, and soon old Lewis began to chuckle.

'Heard the latest about the carrier ?' he asked. 'Had to bring some golf clubs from the station, and sent in a bill "for caryn a bundel of walkyn staves." Ha, ha ! By the way, didn't I see you on Merebury this afternoon ? Jane Griffith, eh ?'

The locum nodded.

'Bad business her husband being killed like that. They've had grief for a guest, that family, one way and another.' He was silent for a minute, then went on : 'The only time I ever knew the doctor let anyone down was when Jane's mother died, and after all ! he couldn't help it. The old doctor I'm talking about—not this present chap.'

'What d'you mean ?'

'Why, the woman was taken ill before her time, and when they came for the doctor, he was in the cellar, dead drunk. Been down to tap a new barrel or something. They hauled him out, and into his gig—damme ! some of the people would rather ha' had him drunk than anyone else sober—but by the time they got him to the cottage, the baby was born, but the mother was dead.'

'A bad business.'

'Well, as I say, it wasn't his fault in a way ; he'd ha' been sober as a judge if only the thing had happened at the right time. Ah well, they'll not find you in the cellar when your call comes. Gad ! I can see the old doctor now, in his ulster and half high hat, driving about in a high gig with a bay mare in the shafts, and his old red setter beside him. He cursed and cured his patients ; and they worshipped him. This present chap's been here close on

twenty years, but he's still "the new doctor" to some of the folks.'

The locum leaned forward, and tapped out his pipe against the mantelpiece. He saw daylight now in a case that had given him some anxiety; the girl was thinking of her mother. Well, she needn't be afraid; as Lewis had said, they wouldn't find him drunk in the cellar. That old chap must have felt it, though; and after the bailiff had shrugged himself into his overcoat, grumbled at the weather and gone, the locum sat on, staring into the fire, and picturing the old doctor in his high gig. Those country G.P.s. had borne the burden and heat of the day—long distances to cover, no cars, no one to share their work or responsibility. Yes, he thought yawning, they knew what work was.

All that night it snowed, and most of the next day; luckily there were few patients to be seen just then, and those were in the village, and could be reached on foot. 'A good job,' thought the doctor, 'I went up Merebury when I did—the girl will be all right now for a bit . . .' and drowsing over the fire, that second evening of the snowfall, he hoped Lewis might look in for a yarn, but time passed, and the old man did not come. Towards eleven o'clock he got up, pulled aside the curtains and looked out; in the shaft of light thus released he saw that snow was still falling—no wonder Lewis hadn't turned up. Well, thank heaven there was no likelihood of a call. He let the curtain fall on the white world, stretched, yawned and went to bed.

Towards two o'clock he was awakened by the sound of a bell pealing through the silent house, and alert at once, he thought, 'Damn it! a night call. . . .' He jumped out of bed, crossed the room and threw up the window.

'Who's there?'

A man's voice answered:

'Jane Griffith's took bad, sir. She slipped outside the door this evening, and they hain't been able to send word afore. I'm the shepherd from Garon, and I be bound to get back there now.'

'All right. I'll come.'

'You cunna find the way alone, sir—'tis a pitchy night. I cunna go back, but I'll get someun—'

'I don't want anyone. I know the way well enough, and I've got a torch. Don't you wait.'

The shepherd hesitated.

'Are you sure?'

'Certain. I'll be along directly. Good night.'

'Good night, sir.'

Five minutes later, the doctor was fumbling with the bolts of the hall door ; as he stooped to the lower one, the pale light of a candle flickered on the landing, and he heard the old housekeeper's croaking voice :

'Shepherd woke me up, sir. You'd best ha' a lad to go with ye. Young Price—he's close by.'

He called up the stairs :

'No, I can't wait. It's all right.'

'Stop, sir. Dunna go by yourself. That lad—'

With the hall door already open, he answered impatiently :

'It's all right. I shall follow the shepherd's footprints if I'm not certain, but the way's easy enough. Get back to bed.'

A moment later, the old woman heard the hall door slam, and now the doctor's torch was flashing like a searchlight along the snow-covered road. The night was moonless, and very still ; no bird moved in the branches of the snow-hung trees ; no dog barked from cottage or farm. Walking quickly, yet carefully—for here and there the snow had drifted and lay deep—he made his way up the hill, and soon turned off the road into the field-path—clear before him, all the way, were the shepherd's footprints. 'Damned lucky,' he thought, 'it isn't snowing now, to cover the man's tracks—and lucky too I had my torch re-charged this morning.' He shifted his bag to the other hand. 'I hope to God things will go all right, but those falls—one never knows. . . .' And remembering how she had clutched his sleeve, and whispered, 'Swear . . .' he smiled a little, and quickened his pace. He'd soon be there now. Here was the copse, with the tall Scotch firs like white-clad sentinels ; and he flashed his torch around the cold landscape, then looked down. Still the prints of the shepherd's boots were clear, but why the dickens, he wondered, hadn't the old chap taken the short cut to the gate—one would save a few minutes that way. He turned towards the short cut, seemed to step on nothing, then pitched forward on his face. The torch was struck from his hand—and then it was dark.

The darkness enfolded him like a cloth, soft, damp, suffocating ; snow blinded him, was wet on his eyes and in his mouth. He struggled up, gripped the bag on which he had fallen, and in a moment found his footing again on firm ground. He was unhurt,

but no physical injury could have assailed him with such suffering as the knowledge that unless the torch was found he could not reach the cottage. In this world so suddenly, hopelessly darkened, he had not the faintest idea which way to turn. For a moment he stood as though stunned ; then, unfastening his bag, he took out a roll of lint and tied one end to the handle, for if once he began to wander aimlessly, he was done for. Then, holding the roll, he sank on his knees in the snow, and began to grope, feeling round the edges of the hole into which he had stumbled. Even if he found the torch, it might be broken and useless, but to find it was his only chance—and hers. He groped on, in a world so silent that he seemed to hear his own heart beat. ‘God !’ he thought at last, raising his arm to brush the sweat from his face, ‘it’s pretty hopeless.’ Nearly six hours to dawn—and in the lonely cottage, Jane Griffith waited.

(‘You’ll come when they send for you. Swear !’
‘I swear I’ll come.’)

The doctor’s hands were bleeding now—he had torn them in the brambles, knocked them against the stones for which he scrabbled desperately, hoping each rounded one might be the handle of the torch—but still he groped on. If he died for it, he wouldn’t give in. He’d never failed a patient yet—he wouldn’t fail Jane Griffith now. The torch must have been flung farther than he thought ; he shifted the bag, and began to seek in another direction, while round him the darkness seemed like some black wall—he could not have believed there could be a night so dark in a snow-covered world. Even a gleam of moonlight might have saved him, but there was no moon. Not a star shone. Still groping and stumbling he began to curse. Farther and farther away, now, from that hole into which he had fallen—too far—and all at once, with agony, he realised the hopelessness of this search. He got to his feet, bruised, wet through, and flung up his bleeding hands to the black dome of the sky. He had cursed—and now he prayed, as men do sometimes pray when no other way is left.

‘God !’ he cried out, ‘let me get to her. Let me get to her.’ And then only a desperate ‘God . . . !’ but a light breeze across the snow was the only answer to that prayer. The breeze died down, and there was silence once more. The doctor’s hands fell to his side ; he stood there motionless, beaten ; and suddenly, strangely, he thought of that old man in the high gig, who had cursed and cured his patients ; yes, and loved them too, labouring

over them for more than forty years. Did all that die—and leave no trace? Again, he flung out his hands to the dark sky.

'You!' he cried out passionately, 'you failed her mother. Come back now, and show me the way. Damn you!' he raved, 'if there's any survival after death, come back and save this girl.'

A small wind blew over the hillside like a sigh, and then once more it was still. Hopeless. . . . Again the doctor's hands fell to his side. Then, picking up his bag, he began to wander aimlessly through the night.

A dog barked.

That deep bark, which sounded close at hand, might have been a voice from heaven, the answer to his wild prayers, so swiftly it lit the fire of hope in the doctor's eyes. The dog must belong to one of those two cottages—there were no other houses within a mile. He whistled; at once came the deep bark again, and he swerved in its direction, stumbling blindly on. He hardly dared to think, 'I'll get there yet. . . .' But still the dog's bark led him on—'God! if only I don't come a cropper again . . .' and almost as the fear passed through his mind, he fell against some obstruction—a gate—his fingers, trembling now, felt along the top rail; they touched a frayed piece of cord, and then a latch; with an almost terrible relief, he knew this was the gate into the paddock below Jane Griffith's cottage. He raised his eyes, and now above him there shone an oblong light; in the doorway of the cottage stood a bent old woman, shielding her eyes, gazing out into the darkness. At that instant, across the shaft of light he saw a shadow; a dog limped past, its head low as if on the track of a lost master—a large dog with a feathery tail.

Later, when mother and child were safe, he and the old woman sat over the kitchen fire drinking strong tea.

'Where's the dog?' he asked, knowing that but for the dog he would not have been in time. The old woman looked at him enquiringly, and he repeated: 'Where's the dog?'

'What dog?'

'Why, the dog that kept barking. It came in here just in front of me.'

She shook her head.

'There's no dog hereabouts.'

'But you must have heard it barking.'

'I hain't heard a sound all night.'

He insisted :

'But I saw it pass the door—a big beast, setter or retriever. It was limping.'

The old woman looked at him sharply, then stooped to poke the fire. After a moment, without raising her head, she said :

'Minds me of the old doctor's dog, as used to sit in the trap, an' drive with him. Caught his foot in a trap, and allus went lame after that. There's no such dog about here now. Hold your cup, sir.'

As dawn glowed red on the distant slopes of Cader Idris, the doctor left the cottage, and went down the steep hill towards the village. No more snow had fallen during the night, and on the hillside two sets of men's footprints showed clearly ; here and there, too, were the delicate markings of birds' claws.

No dog had passed that way.

SEVERANCE.

WHEN we are parted I rebel—
And yet that parting serves me well ;
For from it, though I know not how,
Something is born that can endow
The emptiness, as if by chance,
With riches of significance.
Then I perceive, as not before,
Your spirit's deep and delicate lore ;
Faint hints from your remembered face
Resolve harmoniously in place ;
I more than hear, I more than see !
The soul achieves love's alchemy.

To be apart engenders gold ;
Absence is like the earth's dark mould,
Where some new shoot of wisdom grows
To understanding's perfect rose.

LESLEY GREY.

THE BEST ACTOR IN THE WORLD.

BY A. E. SNODGRASS.

THE fops, peacock-like, were preening their periwigs in the boxes and the orange girls were chattering and giggling below, though the play of *Hamlet* had begun and much eerie mystery was already astir on the battlements of Elsinore. There were late-comers, too, at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, ancestors of those hardy disturbers of the peace who are now being locked out at Covent Garden.

The year was 1661.

But all the inattention and restlessness were not to endure for long. ‘Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,’ quoth Hamlet—and at once, as if a magic wand had waved, a silence came upon the house and every ear was held captive as the young actor, Thomas Betterton, made his first essay in the greatest rôle of all time.

‘Hush,’ whispered Mr. Pepys peremptorily to his garrulous neighbour. ‘It’s beyond imagination.’

And the hush was maintained till the end of the act brought a hurricane of applause and discovered Mr. Pepys ecstatically exclaiming: ‘It’s the best acted part ever done by man. I only know that Mr. Betterton is the best actor in the world.’

But soft, the fair Ophelia. She also was to have her triumph. She came in the person of Mistress Saunderson, one of the first actresses on the English stage; for hitherto the female parts were filled by ‘boys,’ some of whom were really men past forty who frisked as wenches of sixteen, while oft-times ‘even real kings were kept waiting because theatrical queens had not yet shaved.’

Now the fair Ophelia and young Hamlet were in love—both in the play and out of it. And the audience knew they were, and, like audiences of to-day, revelled in the romantic knowledge and its scope for gossip. So that when Hamlet brusquely bade her get to a nunnery, they smiled complacently, in full comprehension that it was only Hamlet’s ‘antic disposition’ that spoke and that very soon it was to a church he would lead her ‘for Betterton or worse.’ And indeed so it came about, except that it was

all for the better and no jot for the worse, for they lived happily ever after and became an ideal Darby and Joan of the footlights.

Fifty years later an aged couple lived in one of the best houses in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden. A handsome pair still, and vastly fond and proud of each other—Mr. and Mrs. Betterton. Dr. Doran, that vivid stage historian, draws the picture with a pen dipped, as always, in the well of human kindness.

'Ever and anon,' he writes, 'she looks with a sort of proud sorrow on her aged husband. His fortune, nobly earned, has been diminished by speculation, but the means whereby he achieved it are his still, and Thomas Betterton in the latter years of Queen Anne is the chief glory of the stage, even as he was in the first year of King Charles II. The lofty column, however, is a little shaken. It is not a ruin, but is beautiful in its decay. Yet that it should decay at all is a source of so much tender anxiety to the actor's wife that her senses suffer disturbance, and there may be seen in her features something of the distraught Ophelia of half a century ago.'

A pleasing picture in sooth, and the more striking inasmuch as it depicts a man who was unaffected by the vices of his times, though he moved in the very hub of dissolute distractions. On and off the stage his life was clean, exemplary; as fine a country gentleman on his farm in Berkshire as he was the perfect actor in town. He enjoyed the friendship of two, if not three, kings. Charles II once lent him his coronation suit for a stage performance. Steele and Addison extolled him, and with Dryden and Pope he was in the closest intimacy. For more than half a century he was the acknowledged king of the theatre, and at the age of seventy had the modesty to aver that he was only just beginning to learn his difficult art.

The greatest actor of the day was also the welcome friend of the greatest preacher of the epoch—John Tillotson, Archbishop of Canterbury, who married a niece of Oliver Cromwell and whose sermons long after his death had a popularity tantamount to the 'best-seller' hall-mark of to-day.

Betterton was ever an honoured guest at the palace at Lambeth, for Tillotson had the broadmindedness of a man of the world to leaven his Puritanism. He once expressed surprise that the actor could sway human feelings more potently than he could contrive as a preacher. Betterton's explanation was: 'You, in the pulpit, only tell a story. I, on the stage, show facts.' Evidently the

Primate was influenced by this analysis, for henceforth he put more gesture into his homilies, suiting 'the action to the word and the word to the action' in Hamlet's most approved style. Garrick later proffered a solution of the same problem to a clerical enquirer when he said : ' You deal with facts as if they were fictions ; I deal with fictions as if they were facts.' Colley Cibber correlativey expands the idea : ' The most a Vandyke can arrive at is to make his portraits of great persons seem to think. A Shakespeare goes farther yet and tells you what his pictures thought. A Betterton steps beyond them both and calls them from the grave to breathe and be themselves again in feature, speech and motion.'

Who, then, was this Thomas Betterton whose private life and public career ' shone like a good deed in a naughty world ' ? Born 300 years ago in Tothill Street, Westminster, he was the son of one of Charles I's under-cooks. Little is known of his early days, except that he received a tolerable education and was apprenticed to a bookseller near Charing Cross. The bookseller happened to have been a theatre wardrobe-keeper before the Commonwealth, and at the Restoration, virtually buttonholing General Monk among his troops in Hyde Park, he obtained a licence to set up a company of players at the Cockpit in Drury Lane. Here Betterton —no doubt gravitating that way for some time—made his first appearance on the boards, joining later Davenant's company at the new theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Charles II took a keen liking for the young actor, and commissioned him to visit Paris and study the methods of the French stage. He brought back several ideas, and it was due to him that shifting scenes were first used in the English theatre in place of tapestry. With a king again in London, and one so pleasure-loving, Betterton with his talents was soon fairly launched on a successful career, though, as matters turned out, he proved far more triumphant as a performer than as a manager. Nevertheless, from a salary which never exceeded £5 a week he saved money, became a landed proprietor near Reading, ran playhouses and owned one. But business was not his forte ; the managerial path was not smooth, and when fifty-seven years of age he lost all his savings in one fell swoop in an East Indies venture.

As an actor, however, he had no set-backs. He created no fewer than 130 new characters. Cibber says of him : ' Betterton was an actor as Shakespeare was an author—without competitors.' Of his large-heartedness we have worthy instances. Like Molière

he would act in spite of illness, rather than stint the profits of his fellow players by absence. Cibber, the future Poet Laureate, was once, while acting in Betterton's company, condemned to be fined for a lapse of discipline. 'But he has no salary; he is a volunteer,' it was represented. 'Oh,' said Betterton, 'then put him down ten shillings a week and forfeit him five.'

Then there is the supreme example of his adopting the child of the man who nearly ruined him. This was the daughter of Sir Francis Watson, the baronet to whom Betterton entrusted his savings for the East Indies commercial enterprise which proved such a fiasco. Watson was left completely bankrupt by the smash; Betterton, denuded of his small fortune, had to start striving again at a time when he might well have retired. But there was no rancour in his nature, and he and his wife took the child to their hearth and heart, lovingly nurtured her and trained her into an actress. She married an actor named Bowman and achieved considerable success on the boards.

Betterton wrote many dramas, adaptations, which were popular in their day. Hamlet was his most admired rôle, but his versatility appears to have been all-embracing; he was as mirthful as Falstaff as he was terrifying as Othello. At seventy he was still without his equal. He played Hamlet when he was seventy-four. He died almost in harness in 1710, and two centuries and a quarter ago was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey. His funeral is the subject of one of the most beautiful papers in the *Tatler*. Steele's tribute to the dead actor being: 'A man whom I always very much admired, and from whose actions I had received more strong impressions of what is great and noble in human nature than from the arguments of the most solemn philosophers.'

Mrs. Betterton did not long survive the loss of a man who in an unsqueamish age lived a faultless domestic life. She also led an estimable life, was unsurpassed in Shakespearean parts, and had the distinction of tutoring Queen Anne, when princess, and Mrs. Sarah Jennings, afterwards Duchess of Marlborough.

THE GIANT BLUE AZALEA.

BY ROBERT VERRIER.

I.

IN Auckland, New Zealand, city of keen gardeners, no two were more keen than Mrs. Orange and Mrs. Leman, and it was not surprising that they, as the keenest of the keen, should be rivals. With such names, indeed, their rivalry was as inevitable as that between the white rose and the red, especially as each lady paralleled in nature the fruit she had adopted. Mrs. Orange was round, plump and silent, abiding in her likes and dislikes, implacable in her hatreds. Mrs. Leman was tall and thin, a rapid talker, acidulous, sometimes venomous, and equally a good hater.

In the first stage of their rivalry there was honest emulation. They sincerely vied with each other in all good sportsmanship as to which should assemble the more beautiful garden. Neither dreamt of stealing a march on the other and they would, as all good gardeners should, even exchange slips, cuttings and seeds of favourite flowers. They would call upon each other to inspect and praise, to peruse catalogues together and to discuss the thousand and one nauseous messes from which flowers draw their perfection of form and colour. They were equals in knowledge, and both knew well how finical plants were in their diet, how, for example, the rose liked this food dry and that with plenty of water, varying its tastes with the time of the year, or how the sweet pea disliked artificial manures but considered soot a titbit. Their acquaintance with the individual constitutions of the multitudinous variety of plants was more sure and of greater extent than that of a doctor in a great hospital of his patients, and when they would summon each other to consult over a sick plant their consultation would lead to prompt diagnosis and effectual treatment.

It was the absurdity of their names, more especially in juxtaposition, that led to the gradual infusion of wickedness into their relations, transforming in course of time emulation into cut-throat competition. Mrs. Orange was rarely mentioned apart from Mrs. Leman, for the reason probably that neither lady was at all distinguished beyond her gardening. Then people began to drop the

title of 'Mrs.' and they became 'Oranges and Lemons' simply, a somewhat spiteful joke that never failed to raise a smile though repeated for the hundredth time. The pity of it was that, faced with this coupling of the two names, their world inevitably took sides, an orange-lover taking the part of Mrs. Orange, a lemon-lover that of Mrs. Leman, each side unconsciously influenced by a natural bias. Discussion as to their respective merits became heated and at times embittered. Even the Almighty was drawn into the controversy, a Mrs. Gudgeon, on one occasion clinching an argument by declaring that it was not for nothing that Oranges always came before Lemons. It was a Providence. No one—not even a little child—would have the face to say 'Lemons and Oranges.'

For some time the two ladies were completely ignorant of the fact that their friends had already taken sides, but there were not wanting unpleasant people who looked with disfavour upon the amicable relations that existed between them. These people were experts in fomenting trouble. Hints and innuendoes were their weapons. Their acknowledged leader could plant a suggestion that might lie dormant for months like the spore of a fungus, to germinate and proliferate eventually till it had eaten up all goodness and there was nothing left but hatred and malice. It was through their influence that Mrs. Orange and Mrs. Leman drifted into secretiveness towards one another, to jealousy, and finally to open and bitter hatred.

A fault common to both their gardening natures widened the breach between them. Both ladies had a love for size combined with uniqueness. In the beginning, during the period of co-operation, they strove their utmost to reconcile size with beauty and even would find the strength of mind to reject size uncompromisingly if not allied to beauty, while there was a convention between them that 'an unique flower' meant 'any flower, for preference of great size, possessed by Mrs. Orange and Mrs. Leman, but not by any other gardener in Auckland.' As they drew apart, so this fault progressively coarsened and the beauty of their gardens declined. It was enough that their blooms should have great size and, through their size, be unique; and 'an unique flower' now meant to Mrs. Orange 'any flower of great size not possessed by Mrs. Leman,' in reverse to Mrs. Leman's 'any enormous flower not possessed by Mrs. Orange.' It did not matter to either lady that a pansy should be like a staring death's-head of the hue of brickdust so long as it

was bigger than any possessed by the other. They ceased visiting each other's gardens but listened eagerly to the reports of go-betweens, enquiring anxiously as to the diameter of 'that woman's' dahlias or the length of her petunia trumpets. On one occasion Mrs. Orange actually provided her staunch partisan, Mrs. Gudgeon, with a foot-rule with which to measure the dial of a sunflower produced by Mrs. Leman, which had been described to her as 'almost as big round as a bicycle wheel.' She also had a sunflower which could be described, somewhat romantically perhaps, in the same terms. Mrs. Gudgeon returned breathless. One foot nine and three-quarter inches! Mrs. Orange's heart missed a beat. 'From petal tip to petal tip?' she asked, following a long silence. Mrs. Gudgeon, interrupting for a moment her anxious stare, nodded. 'Come,' said Mrs. Orange.

They approached her sunflower. Mrs. Orange had to poise her fat little body on the very tips of her toes and to stretch her plump arms above her head to the limit of their extent. Her legs trembled so with tension and with anxiety that she could only snatch a measurement with her thumbnail as a guide before she was compelled to come to earth. She could not believe her eyes on looking at the ruler. If it should be true! She said huskily to her friend, 'You try, dear.'

For Mrs. Gudgeon it was an easy matter. She marked the place deliberately with her thumbnail, then brought the ruler close to her eyes while Mrs. Orange, choking with anxiety, watched her and waited for the verdict. 'Two feet!'

A long sigh of relief escaped Mrs. Orange. 'I could not believe my eyes,' she said faintly. 'Thank God! I have beaten her.'

Mrs. Leman heard the news within the hour.

II.

In public the two ladies bowed to each other until there occurred a crisis that eliminated all trace of good feeling from their relationship, and what was still an enjoyable comedy to their 'friends' became serious tragedy to them.

Mrs. Leman had a cousin in America who was in the habit of sending her cuttings from American newspapers. This cousin must have possessed a most curious mind. From the quantity of cuttings sent, it would seem that she was accustomed to read a newspaper with a pair of scissors in hand eagerly poised to swoop down and cut out any article that might tickle her fancy. They treated of

an endless variety of subjects but they had one feature in common which appealed strongly to Mrs. Leman, causing her to read them with careful enjoyment. In every article stress was laid on some unique quality in the subject, as, for example, 'Chicago Baker Bakes World's Largest Loaf,' 'Boston, England, Hen Lays Round Egg,' 'World's Oldest Man Dies in Constantinople,' 'Azalea with GIANT BLUE FLOWERS Raised by Colorado Nurseryman.' It was evident that the newspapers of the United States ransacked the world for news that exactly suited the tastes of at least two of their public, and no paragraph that Mrs. Leman had ever received gave her more pleasure than the one headed, 'Azalea with GIANT BLUE FLOWERS Raised by Colorado Nurseryman.' The particulars were astounding. The flowers, it was stated, were four and one-half inches across and three inches in length. Mrs. Leman was annoyed by the journalistic vagueness of the measurements. 'Four and one-half inches across what!' was her impatient comment, but, even to her expert mind, two important facts stood out clearly—firstly, that the blooms must surely be of unique size and, secondly, that a blue azalea was so rare that, if there was by any chance another such in the world, it had never been heard of. She felt, as she turned these two facts over in her mind, the soothing warmth of pure joy. In a clear-cut vision she saw herself standing before the only Giant Blue Azalea in the world as its possessor. The shrub was in full bloom and Mrs. Orange passed and repassed the gate, fighting a losing battle against the desire to turn her head to take one look.

When Mrs. Leman awoke from her pleasing day-dream, she had one fixed idea in her mind—that she must at all costs become the owner of the Giant Blue Azalea. She did not doubt that the shrub existed, for, besides being one of the host that believes firmly in the printed word, she could not have brought herself to think that it had not been created expressly for the confusion of Mrs. Orange. Else, why should the cutting have been sent to her? Why should the shrub have been raised in an obscure village in Colorado when it might have been produced in New Zealand right under Mrs. Orange's nose? It was the work of —. The blank may be filled in according to taste. Mrs. Leman used 'Providence' in her thoughts.

A prompt and energetic planner, she decided to throw all her weight on the side of Providence and, as she was a very wealthy woman, that weight was considerable. She was able to enclose

with her letter a cheque sufficiently fat to make the Colorado nurseryman jump to a super-Yankee hustle. She took every precaution she could. Her Bank Manager smoothed the way for the cheque so that it should be 'as good as hard cash' when presented with the despatch note. She gave minute instructions as to packing and forwarding. She demanded a cable giving 'yes' or 'no' on receipt of her letter—and cheque. A month she waited, nursing her triumph in as perfect content as her nature would allow. At the end of five weeks she was still steadfast in her faith. In the sixth week her faith was justified. The cable arrived.

She carried it up to her room and mixed a strong dose of sal volatile, because she knew that the news, whether good or bad, would make her heart palpitate. It could not have been better. The nurseryman must have been hard up for money, for he had lost no time in qualifying to lay hands on it. The cable stated, 'Had your letter to-day. Giant Blue yours. On Rail.' Mrs. Leman drained her glass and lay down on her bed.

The weeks that followed were not altogether happy. Mrs. Leman was a worrier. In spite of her great faith, anxiety as to the welfare of her new treasure on its journey would come to the surface from the depths where it was stirring ceaselessly. She traced, as nearly as she could estimate it, its progress from day to day. She comforted herself with the thought that people were almost as sentimentally kind to a plant in transit as to an unattended child or puppy. Only the other day she had read of a steward taking a sickly travelling plant into his cabin, watering it and nursing it back to health. Fortunately for herself, no suspicion as to the genuineness of the shrub's pretensions obtruded itself. She had seen it set out in black and white that Angus X. McDiarmid, nurseryman, of Junction City, Colorado, had raised a Giant Blue Azalea, with flowers four and one-half inches across and three inches in length. Besides the man was either a Scot or of Scotch descent and therefore incapable of dishonesty, to a sister gardener at any rate, however keen he might be to lay hands on the money.

There were, as a matter of fact, no grounds for worry. The shrub had arrived in perfect condition. Everywhere *en route* railwaymen or sailors had tended it with loving care. Its progress had been a triumph. It was not in bloom, but Angus X. McDiarmid had left no doubt as to its identity. He had not only painted in huge white letters against the green of its tub the words,

'THE GIANT BLUE AZALEA'

but he had also pasted on three newspaper cuttings giving full particulars, knowing well that, while people would barely notice the letters that he who ran might read, they would eagerly stoop to scan the small print. Then they would take in the large letters with understanding. The news of the journey was flashed round the world and even the sedate newspapers of New Zealand, proud in their imitation of *The Times*, gave it welcome under a minor headline.

The publicity did not altogether please Mrs. Leman. At one stroke every keen gardener in Auckland was aware of her master-stroke. Mrs. Orange knew and was prepared. The effect would have been so much the greater if she could have planted the shrub quietly in her garden, have nursed it and her triumph until its giant blooms of unique colour burst upon the world. The news would have percolated through the medium of gossip to the ears of a Mrs. Orange unprepared, whose garden would have become a desert in her eyes. Suppose, too, that after all the shrub should turn out to be an ordinary azalea. What a fool she would appear! It looked like an ordinary azalea. It was not. From the first it thrived in Auckland's wonderful volcanic soil. It bloomed in due course and all the city came to see it. It exceeded expectations. Mrs. Leman, by careful measurements, ascertained that its largest flower was four and seven-eighths inches across the corolla at its widest spread. Its blueness was but a shade lighter than that of the violet. She sent a cable off to McDiarmid—'Wonderful.'

There came a day on which Mrs. Leman enjoyed a triumph such as she had never hoped to experience. The azalea stood in full view of the gate and, as she stood worshipping before it, she became aware that somebody was walking slowly backwards and forwards on the street footpath. She knew that it was Mrs. Orange. She enjoyed the knowledge that her rival was fighting a losing battle. The gate clicked. She did not turn her head but held herself perfectly still while Mrs. Orange walked up the drive. She did not move even when Mrs. Orange spoke, 'Clara! Cannot we let bygones be bygones?' Mrs. Leman must have been aware of the depth of the humiliation from which this appeal came, but she made no response. Still deeper Mrs. Orange sank. 'Won't you give me a cutting of your azalea, Clara?' The appeal was made in a tone that Dives might have used to Lazarus, but Mrs. Leman

was adamant. She continued her worship as though Mrs. Orange had been a hundred miles away, throwing into her expression all the ecstasy of which she was capable. It was this expression that brought back to Mrs. Orange her self-respect. She had made her submission and had been ignored. She had seen the look on Mrs. Leman's face and knew that it had been assumed for her greater humiliation. She spoke up now with intense deliberation. 'Listen, Clara Leman. By hook or by crook, I will get a cutting of your azalea. I will get it if I have to wait till you are dead.'

Mrs. Leman preserved her expression until she heard the gate slam, then her hand flew to her heart and she hurried indoors to the comfort of her bed and her sal volatile.

III.

Death came to Mrs. Leman. She was one of those unfortunates whose hearts respond too readily to the emotions, submerging them as a burst of premature applause may submerge the performance of great music. Such hearts cannot last. They run down into silence the more quickly for their unruly outbursts.

Her death-bed was at first unhappy, for she was faced with a problem more difficult than any she had ever faced before. The urgency of the demand for a solution deprived her of rest. She was haunted by the voice of Mrs. Orange, 'I will get a cutting of your azalea. I will get it if I have to wait till you are dead.' It was hard enough, she felt, to be parted from her treasure, but the thought of that woman standing over her shrub in the free daylight, carefully selecting the most likely cutting, while she herself lay imprisoned in darkness or perhaps stood by as a shade powerless to interfere, was a worse torture to her mind than any throe of palpitation had ever been to her body. She might have ordered the shrub to be destroyed, but she could not bring herself to do that. She loved it and she liked to think that it would remain to bloom year by year as a reminder to the world of her triumph. The problem remained. How could she ensure its survival and yet prevent her rival from obtaining the tiniest cutting that might hand on and so destroy its uniqueness of size and colour?

The answer came accompanied by great content and peace of mind. She would leave it in her will that her Giant Blue Azalea should be planted on her grave. Mrs. Orange would not dare to touch it. She would not dare. It would be sacrilege. Her azalea would be hers still, and they would not be parted even in

death. Its roots would push down through the soil, would twine about her and caress her, and she would give herself to produce such blooms as the world had never seen before. They would be a part of herself. She went over again and again details from which a healthy mind would have recoiled, yet it was her fortune that this obsession enabled her to smile in the face of death.

The cemetery where Mrs. Leman was buried became, in the late springtime, one of the most frequently visited places in Auckland. When the azalea was in bloom, crowds flocked to do homage to its beauty, and no one was more often seen beside the grave than Mrs. Orange. She did not go there only when the shrub was in bloom but more often she went at other times of the year, in the early springtime when the brown wood opened secret portals to let out the swelling green buds, in the autumn when the foliage looked tired after the summer heat, and most often of all in winter when life retired to shelter and rest, to gather strength for a triumphant return.

She visited the grave most often in winter because that was the season for taking cuttings. She would stand gazing longingly at Mrs. Leman's treasure, selecting in her mind the most likely shoots, though any one at random would have served Mrs. Orange. She could almost coax life from dead wood. In her mind ran continually her challenge to Mrs. Leman. 'I will get a cutting of your azalea. I will get it even if I have to wait till you are dead.'

She had uttered these words at the time with such intensity of bitterness and determination to fulfil them that they could never be wiped from her mind. They were an expression of her nature and now she had only one desire in life—to possess a counterpart of the Giant Blue Azalea—yet she did not dare to stretch out her hand. Mrs. Leman had beaten her. Her enemy had placed between her and her desire an invisible barrier which she did not dare to cross.

The passage of time could not lessen Mrs. Orange's desire. It was too deep. Her placid, peasant nature was dominated by her lust for possession, until at last there came a time when she was willing even to defy superstition and, more daring still in her eyes, public opinion. Public opinion had been a greater obstacle to the achievement of her desire than superstition. If she could have committed the sin of sacrilege secretly between herself and her god, a Giant Blue Azalea would long since have been blooming in her garden.

Early one morning, in the fall of the winter three years after the death of Mrs. Leman, Mrs. Orange slipped guiltily into the cemetery. She had at last made up her mind. In her hand-bag she carried the little silver secateurs which had been given her by Mrs. Leman herself long ago in the days of their friendship. She had a dim notion that in some way her use of them would lessen her sin. The hand that wielded the instrument might be that of Mrs. Orange, but the instrument itself had been Clara's, and it would almost seem as though the actual severance would be her doing. So she reasoned childishly to placate her conscience in advance.

But Mrs. Orange never took a cutting of the azalea. When the blades of the secateurs were bruising the bark she could not bring herself to exert the slight further pressure required to sever the cutting. She stood for a long time trying to rally her courage, but her courage had to face and overcome a host of superstitious fears. She could not do it. She drew back from the grave sulkily, putting the blame for her failure on Mrs. Leman. It was she who had held her hand, and at that thought panic almost conquered her and drove her from the cemetery; but as she stood there trembling, with downcast eyes, she caught sight of a small branch that trailed near the ground and her purpose was suddenly renewed and strengthened. She was inspired. She thought, 'I said I would get a cutting. I can't, but I will layer that branch. Clara never thought of that. It will not be the same thing. She can't stop me doing that.'

Trembling now with eagerness, she hastily scooped out a small trench with the secateurs below the branch, secured it in position with a small stone and carefully covered it, pressing down the soil firmly. It was done. She must wait a year, but that she would do willingly.

Growth is easy and sure in that wonderful climate. With the coming of spring the branch showed life. In the summer it began to throw out an independent stem. Unmistakably it was taking root. Mrs. Orange visited it nearly every day, always carrying with her in her bag a small bottle of water for its refreshment. She longed for the day when she could with safety sever the branch that stretched like an umbilical cord from her azalea to Mrs. Leman's—the parent.

That great occasion came at last. She chose a warm, moist day following heavy rain, when the soil would not crumble away from the roots. She found the earth so wet that she could cut into

it as though it were cheese and she was able to mould it into a ball round the tender roots.

Mrs. Orange carried her azalea home, her exultation mounting at every step. She had long ago made preparations for its reception. In a quiet corner of the garden she had trenched a patch of ground, loosened the subsoil, put in broken bricks for drainage, dug in a well-rotted compost, and mixed a wonderful manure prescription of her own which could not fail to please her new treasure. She had done everything she could.

It was clear from the first coming of spring that the azalea would respond to Mrs. Orange's generous treatment. It shot up and flourished. It threw out side branches. Her excitement was intense when it showed unmistakable signs that it would flower in due season. She would bring out her chair to sit within sight of it, staring at it over her knitting. She had felt no prick of conscience since her change of plan and her contentment was almost as complete as that of the well-fed tabby that purred by her side.

One question often occupied her mind at this time. Should she allow her azalea to bloom that year? As a gardener she knew that it would be bad for it to bear flowers so early in life. She ought to disbud completely, but, as a woman who had been through three years of torture before finally achieving her desire, she longed to see the shrub in bloom. She left one bud. One giant blue flower would be the symbol of her victory in the long struggle with Mrs. Leman.

Mrs. Orange had left a stout centre bud. It was long and shiny in its scaly armour. She watched it swelling from day to day, seeing in her imagination how it furled the giant blue petals so neatly within the green casing. She waited impatiently for the tinge of colour that would show at the tip, indicating that the bud was complete in every fold, ready to dispense with its protection and unfurl its beauty to the world.

One evening of lowering purple clouds, full of the promise of warm spring rain, she visited the azalea for the last time that day. It was too dark to see very clearly, but she thought she could detect a loosening at the tip of the bud. She touched it gently with her finger. It was certainly of a different texture. It was smoother, silky to the touch. She was surprised. The bud did not seem to her to equal in size those of the Giant Blue Azalea. She had not expected it to bloom for some time yet, but this was forcing weather and perhaps it was a little too forward. During the night she lay

awake listening to the rain. The million notes of the raindrops on the iron roof of her house combined into a single, prolonged drumming of deafening volume. She smiled to herself in the darkness. To-morrow would witness her triumph. It would clear at dawn, and at the first touch of the sun the bud would unfurl. She awoke to bright sunshine. She could not wait to dress, but slipped on a dressing-gown and hurried downstairs. Outside, her eyes were blinded for a moment, though she saw clearly enough when she reached the quiet corner where her azalea was undoubtedly in bloom. The blossom was of normal size and its colour was blood-red.

Gisborne, New Zealand.

RICHMOND CASTLE, YORKSHIRE.

DARK, holy Night unveils her sombre figure
And lays her on the yielding form of Earth,
Limb to damp limb in wedlock dread united—
In mystic closeness that evolves the birth
Of solemn peace. The taverns neighbouring sited
Quell sullenly their raucous, drunken mirth ;
Ringed castle turrets lose their strident vigour,
Looming in pendant mist and shadowed haze ;
A gaping, ruined window, towering vastly,
Looks downward blindly upon twisted maze
Of steep, precipitous, heaving hills ; and ghostly
Cottages, glistening, gas-lit, wet, still gaze
In pensive gloom on the dark, tumultuous river.
The drowsy sheep submerge their dewy fleece
Within the darkness of the tall trees' shading :

From hill to hill the day's loud noises cease
And yield in silence till the star-points, fading,
Leave blood-stained Morn to slay its mother, Peace.

FRANK FLETE.

NARROWING FATE.

BY JOHN COGHLAN.

It was strange how lonely the house felt, Rickaby thought. Never before had it seemed so quiet, so utterly deserted. Not that this was his wife's first absence from home.

'I'm missing her,' he said, attempting to concentrate his eyes on the page of the book before him; but the printed words conveyed no suggestion to his mind. They blurred, they leaped on the white paper. He got to his feet, stabbed at the fire with the old bent poker; unlocked a cupboard with a suggestion of furtiveness and took out a whisky bottle. He poured himself out a four-finger nip and drank it, with the addition of only a little water, and a warm glow filled his veins.

'That's better. Didn't think her—her going away would affect me this way. Ever so much better—yes.' He settled himself again to his book. The clock pointed to eleven, and in a little while would come the inevitable knocking on the floor of the room above, which was his wife's imperious summons. He discovered that his ears were open wide, that he was listening for the signal, that his heart was even beating a little thickly, after the fashion of a bad boy's when he has been in mischief and expects punishment. Then he laughed.

'She won't knock to-night. Freedom's a good thing occasionally.'

He had greatly looked forward to this spell of freedom, for his wife was a masterful woman, one in no way afraid to speak her mind freely and at length. Her harsh voice had been getting on his nerves lately; it rasped them as a file rasps steel, and the unthinkable peccadillo that had caused the initial breach between them had been revived and exhumed and fresh post-mortems had been held. But now she was gone, and he was at liberty to live his life according to his own fashion, until such time as she should return.

'Queer, this whisky doesn't seem to take hold of a man,' he said. The printed words were still ragged and indistinct, but his every sense was normal—even more active than normal. He

decided that there was a row brewing for his spirit-dealer very shortly ; the fellow must have diluted the whisky. Rickaby got slowly to his feet and filled himself out another heartening measure ; he drank it slowly, paying regard to the flavour. No ; there was still the old bite to it ; it scorched his palate and set him coughing, as had done those surreptitious drinks when his wife was at home. He cuddled down in the chair again and waited for that blissful haziness which made even the most ominous cares seem but as trifles—and before he realised it he was again listening for that summoning knock.

There it was ! A little fainter than was customary, perhaps, but still it was the measured beat of the stick which she kept by her bedside on the stained and varnished planking of the floor near the bed's head.

'Don't be silly !' Rickaby adjured himself. 'She's gone away—she'll be away for two solid months—two good, free months. Your fancy is playing you tricks, my son.' He looked again towards the whisky-bottle with something of longing, and waited for the haziness, which held magnificently aloof. There was unquestionably something wrong with the liquor ; the bottle had been ullaged. Well, there were other bottles—plenty of them, so what did it matter ? In a little while he decided he would draw a fresh cork, and enjoy to the full the pleasures of temporary bachelorhood. He concentrated his gaze on the book, and re-read a joke that had caused him a while before to laugh consumedly.

'Don't think much of that kind of humour,' he grunted. 'Feeble stuff—wouldn't make a kid laugh.' He threw a fresh log on the fire ; the embers collapsed with a bit of a squelching crash, and he started.

'Never thought I'd suffer from nerve-strain,' he said. 'Let's see—she'd be about at Wavenhoe now. Well—he was at the whisky-bottle again, measuring out another dose—"well, here's pleasant journey to you, Mrs. Rickaby." As he set the glass down, the knocking came again—his wife's summons. He took the lamp from the table—it flared high as he moved it and the chimney was blackened up one side—and walked slowly up the stairs, as he had done every night for years. He entered the room above, prepared for the torrential recriminations that would assail him for his lack of thought in sitting up late and disturbing his wife's honestly earned rest ; but the light showed the bed to be untenanted.

'Lord, what a fool I am—what a fool !' he gulped. 'That

shows how a man can become obsessed with an idea. And yet—’ Holding the flaring lamp gingerly he scouted about the room. No; there was nothing there to cause that faint, suggestive knocking; it had been hallucination pure and simple. He was free—free to sit up clear through the night, if he wished. And the book down below was a chatty, companionable sort of a volume, too—if a man could only concentrate his thoughts on its humour he’d soon forget this queer tinge of loneliness.

Rickaby shut the bedroom door and went downstairs quickly—so quickly that oil sputtered from the well of the lamp and fouled his hand. A drip fell on the stair-carpet; there would be another outcry about that piece of carelessness.

‘No, there won’t,’ he said. ‘No, there won’t.’ All that was necessary was that he should get a cloth and a drop of petrol—the little garage would supply that—and make a workmanlike job of the cleaning-up.

‘I’ll do that in the morning,’ he said, and heard raindrops patter on the staircase window. ‘Time enough for it then. I’ve got all the time a man could want. She won’t be back for ages. She won’t—be—back—for—ages.’ He repeated the remark deliberately, dwelling on its pleasant sound. Entering the living-room he set the lamp carefully down, and lifted the whisky-bottle. Poor stuff it was, when taken openly—he decided that its chief charm lay in its surreptitiousness. A man who was forbidden to imbibe spirits of any kind whatsoever by the firmly pronounced dictum of a narrow-minded wife couldn’t appreciate the worth of the temporary lifting of the ban.

‘I’ve a good mind to get drunk—if this stuff’ll let me !’ he declared. ‘Why not? She’ll never know; there won’t be any rows about it. Anyhow, I’ll sit up all night if I want to.’ He settled himself again, staring into the heart of the fire. And recent happenings crowded into his memory; that memory which the liquor refused to thicken and distort. Everything stood out as clearly as if it were actually happening all over again.

Well, Ellen had gone; that was the main thing. She’d taken a lot of persuading, but finally she had agreed to go visiting in her native town. She had told her nearest neighbour of her intention.

‘It means an early start,’ she said when the neighbour called around, ‘but I reckon it’s best to get the journey through in one day. No use taking two days over it—with all the expense of putting up at some hotel. Yes; I’ll get away good and early. Bob

here will drive me to the station. I never encouraged his having that two-seater, but it seems as though it might be of some use now.' The neighbour, Mrs. Gow, had applauded her resolution, had even envied her her coming change of scene and air.

' You'll write a word and tell me how you get on ? ' she said.

' Don't expect too much from me in the way of letters, Mrs. Gow—my own people, that I'm going to see, are always complaining what a poor correspondent I am ! '

' Don't worry if you hear the old 'bus back-firing a bit when I start her up,' Rickaby added laughingly.

' Once I get to sleep,' said Mrs. Gow, ' an earthquake wouldn't do more than make me turn round.'

Rickaby reached for his pipe and tobacco-jar and stuffed in a pipeful. He slapped his pockets for the rattle of the match-box, but there were no matches. He got up and went to the table, searching. Matches in plenty were upstairs, of course, in the cupboard in the bedroom, where his wife stored them ; but somehow he hesitated to journey there. The training of years is not lightly overcome, and to enter that bedroom meant a stern summons from his wife.

' A bit o' paper to make a spill—that'll be good enough,' he said. The blotter was on the end of the table that was not covered by the white cloth ; he took it up. On the speckled surface of the upper sheet of blotting-paper the imprint of flowing writing stood out vividly—almost scorchingly, indeed. His own bold hand-writing. And out of curiosity he held the blotter before the mirror and read the address of his wife's parents. That was the letter he had written, of course, to say—

He pulled the upper sheet out and folded it into a long spill ; he lit it at the fire and applied the blaze to the tobacco in his pipe ; when it was going to his satisfaction he threw the spill amongst the crackling logs and watched it consume slowly. Why it was he took the poker and scattered the resultant flakes of ash he could not say, but when the fire was burning smoothly again he knew what might almost have amounted to a glow of relief. Then he took up his book once more.

There was the knocking again ! Strange what tricks a man's fancy played him and what creatures of habit men became ! For every night for years past he had inevitably been summoned to the upper chamber at eleven sharp, and if he refused to obey that urgent order there followed, as inevitably as night follows day, a

tedious curtain-lecture on his selfishness and lack of thought for others.

'Don't be a fool,' he insisted. 'It's your fancy; no one's knocking—really.' Deliberately he set his thoughts in train. Incident by incident he went through his later years. Independent as he was, a man of scholarly tastes, fond of solitude, this little home in the wilderness had appealed strongly to him. The quiet, the remoteness from interruption, encouraged thought, bred an ambition to set those thoughts down on paper. The worst of it was that his wife failed so utterly to sympathise with his literary tastes—she sneered at his writings.

He and his wife were temperamentally different in every way, and he wondered, staring into the heart of the fire, what he could have possibly seen in her. Pretty? Oh yes, she had been pretty, until that warring soul of hers had caused the dainty face to develop lines of care, until the sweet chin had doubled itself, and even threatened to treble itself.

Well, anyway—she'd gone—and he had a chance to live his own life for a couple of months at least. But it was as though she had left her spirit behind her, for even as the man congratulated himself on his release from the irksomeness of this domestic tyranny, he heard the soft knocking again.

'Ridiculous!' he said, and ran his hand across his brow. He stared wonderingly at the dampness that showed; a bead of moisture dripped from his palm. 'Damn' foolishness; she isn't up there now; she's gone—you're free—free!'

He pulled stolidly at his pipe. How lonely the house seemed! Never a sound anywhere, save the deliberate ticking of the clock, the creak of the stair—and then the knocking again! He got up and shook his fist at the ceiling; then he lurched across to the cupboard and selected another bottle of whisky from the row. Eleven bottles in all; he had brought them back from the town after seeing his wife off by train. One certain thing about it—they couldn't all be ullaged.

'I'll mix myself a regular north-wester,' he said, and proceeded to do so. He drank thirstily, smacking his lips over the spirit. 'Two months' freedom—ah? Two clear, good months! Lord! what a hell it's been. I didn't seem to realise it in the happening, but now—I'll be able to do good work. Never able to concentrate properly before. There's that handy-man coming to-morrow; he'll do what work's necessary, and there needn't be any inter-

ruptions.' He stretched himself and wondered at his continued clarity of thought.

'I'll tackle that novel I've always had in my mind; in two months I ought to be able to break the back of it. No interruptions; no having to listen to her outbursts on domestic matters. Just the sympathy of the stars and the winds, and the scent of the flowers and the pines and the—and a man's dreams, the sort of dreams that he hardly dare let himself indulge in.' He lost himself in reflection. But the low knocking interrupted the train of his thoughts and he shivered.

'Fire's burning low,' he muttered, and hove on another log. The upward-flying sparks altered the run of his mind-processes; he discovered himself remembering with astonishing clearness his drive back from the station in the gathering dawn. Laughter and happiness had filled him then; he felt like a man from whose shoulders a monstrous burden had been lifted. Free, free!

He awakened from his exultation to discover himself again in the upper room, searching. It was that maddening knocking that had drawn him there—the whole business was so ridiculous. He had allowed the obsession to dominate him too entirely, he informed himself; the practice of years is not destroyed in a breath. Night by night he had heard that summons—as though his wife realised that the quiet hour spent below, after her retiring, was worth more than all other hours of the twenty-four to him, and were jealous that others should occupy his thoughts. Often and often he had tried to interest her in that dream-world which he created in his own mind; but she was mentally incapable of understanding anything but the rigidly practical side of life. She was a woman who made it her boast that she had never read a novel—she considered such recreation a scandalous waste of time. And always, looking up from his book, bringing himself back to realities with a start, Rickaby had seen her knitting or sewing or calculating household expenditures to the last decimal point. It was on such occasions that he remembered a certain pretty girl he had met by chance—a girl of infinite understanding, who met a man half-way in his thoughts and took up the thread and broadened and embellished it. A very inspiration of a girl, no less—with merry laughter always on her lips and a glow of ineffable wonderment in her eyes.

There was nothing to cause the sound, he decided; it must exist entirely in his own excited fancy. He made a comprehensive

search, going down on hands and knees, pawing beneath the bed, opening the wardrobe and shaking the hanging garments within.

'Imaginary, purely imaginary,' he assured himself as he reseated himself. 'I'll get to work now—properly to work, and then I shan't hear it.' He took another liberal helping of the whisky, swallowing it as if it were innocuous water.

'It *has* lost its bite,' he said. 'Well, what's the odds? Yes, I'll write—I feel I can now. Night's when a man's best thoughts come—if Ellen had only been able to understand it, which she never could. Anything that happened after eleven o'clock at night was always an immorality in her narrow sight.'

He caught himself glancing furtively over his shoulder when a piece of furniture creaked; when the low knocking sounded again, he jumped to his feet with a bitten-off oath. This time, refusing to ascend the stairs, he shouted loudly from the foot:

'Ellen! Ellen!' he cried. There was no reply, and he laughed loudly at the absurdity of his action. Ellen was away. The neighbours knew that she had gone away in the earliest dawn, even before the dawn.

'I know—it's telepathy,' he said.

But he adjusted the lamp, mixed himself another drink, found paper and writing materials and settled himself down for serious work. There was a wonderful idea somewhere at the back of his mind—it was holding itself aloof for the moment, but by dint of concentration he was sure he would grasp it and embellish it, and make it grow into a story of enormous beauty and wonderment. But before he had grasped the opening sentence his thoughts were astray again, because the knocking had been repeated. And thinking of the knocking reminded him of his wife, who did not approve of his keeping late hours; and thinking of his wife—here was another paradox—reminded him of the well at the end of the waste patch of ground that had once been a garden. He remembered that he had told her of the danger of approaching too near that well's brink—the ground was treacherous and sodden, and the well-kerb had crumbled away.

'I'll have that place properly filled in,' he said, staring straight before him, visualising the scene. 'No; it's too deep to fill in properly; best thing will be to cover it, a good big slab of stone, and then bricks and mortar on top of it. I promised Ellen I'd have it made more secure—Curse that knocking! I *will* find out what's causing it.'

He made an exhaustive search clear through the little house ; he carefully bolted all such doors as might be likely to slam or vibrate in the draughts that raced here and there. He was quite sure that he had taken every possible precaution, but as he sat down again the knocking was even more insistent than before. Not that it came steadily ; it was fitful ; first a few quick taps, then a pause, then a few more—a little louder, perhaps, exactly as his wife knocked when she was growing irritated at his quiet show of independence.

'I'll go to bed—soon forget it when I'm asleep.' Then, inconsequently enough, he began to think of the letter he had written to his wife's people. What precisely had he said ?

'Hang it ! Did I—did I—? I ought to have kept a copy ! Well ! never mind ; it's too late now, and—oh, damn that knocking !' He realised that sleep was out of the question until he had run down the cause of the irritating sound.

'Why, I know what it is—I know. It's the cover of the well ; it's tapping against the kerb when the wind blows. Of course, that's it. Still, it's as well to make certain. I'll just take a look at it—jam it securely, and then—bed wouldn't be a bad idea. A good night's sleep to steady a fellow's nerves, eh ? No getting away from it, I'm jumpy to-night.' He took the lamp in his hand and unfastened the door.

'That's what it is—the well-cover. I'll just slip down and fasten it,' he said, and laid the lamp on the path. The well-top showed, a dark blur against the patch of sky that was visible above the ledge. He walked slowly, cautiously thither.

He slipped as he reached the kerb, and pitched forward.

The man-of-all-work tilted his cap on his bullet head and meditatively scratched his ear.

'Now, that's rum,' he observed. 'That's most uncommon rum. A lamp standin' on the path, door open—well, different folks has different fancies. I'll enkwier.' He knocked at the open door, but there was no reply. It was full day, clear and sweet after a rain-washed night. The room he entered was littered with scattered papers, the fire-place was full of feathery ash ; a smell of spirit was everywhere. The man-of-all-work rapped on the table ; securing no reply. He shouted ; still there was no reply. It seemed to him as though some uncanny presence were in the house, and he was not an imaginative man. 'I don't like it,' he said.

'Don't seem able to breathe here, sort of.' He passed through the door again and stood, still scratching his head, staring down the garden. Then he got through a hedge, crossed a field, through another hedge, and hailed a man who had just commenced work in a potato patch.

'Hi, mister!'

'Well, what's got hold of you?' asked Mr. Gow. 'And who are you, anyway?'

'Servant to Mr. Rickaby, the gent at the cottage. Told me to turn up first thing this morning, he did. Well, guv'nor, I turned up. There ain't no one there.'

'Rubbish! There was a light burning when I went to bed.'

'There's a lamp standin' out on the path, but there ain't never a soul in the house. Door open, too. It looks fishy to me.'

They stood together beside the door, staring at the lamp, staring down the garden. It was Mr. Gow who offered a solution.

'That well-cover's slipped,' he said. 'Blown off by the wind last night, maybe—but—well, he can't have gone far. There are his boots by the hearth; he must have gone out in his slippers. It's funny, but I'm going back to look at that well.' They walked down the weed-grown path together. The well-kerb had collapsed, leaving a gap.

There were blurred footprints, partially obliterated by the rain, in the sodden earth near by.

'Might as well make sure,' said Mr. Gow. 'That rope'll hold me—being a light-weight as I am. Tell you what, my man, I'll get into the bucket and then you can lower me down.' He acted on the word, and descended into the foul-smelling deeps. The man-of-all-work walked back steadily with the crank. Presently he heard a muffled shout.

'Ay, right-o, guv'nor, I'll heave up.' He worked at the crank assiduously, until Mr. Gow's pallid, mud-streaked face showed.

'There's two of them down there—Rickaby and his wife!'

• • •
'What's that knocking?' asked the police-inspector who was making an investigation of the premises. 'Don't you hear it—a tap-tapping? There it is again.'

His assistant threw open the bedroom window and looked out. 'Just a branch tapping the shutter,' he said. 'It's the wind that's moving it. . . .'

Dublin.

MR. HOME'S TRAGEDY.

BY JAMES FERGUSSON.

THE tragedy of *Douglas*, by John Home, holds a curious and unique position in the history of the stage. It is a blank verse tragedy, conventional in form, pseudo-Elizabethan in language, but extraordinarily compact in its construction, and having only five principal characters: resembling, from a technical point of view, Dryden's *All for Love* rather than Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. It was the most famous stage piece written in the eighteenth century, and is absolutely forgotten to-day. It is the only successful tragedy ever written by a Scotsman or a minister of the Gospel, and the only English one not by Shakespeare to hold the stage continuously for more than a century. There is not a single line in it which has passed into everyday use as a quotation, as did 'He who hesitates is lost' and 'Tis not in mortals to command success . . .' in Addison's *Cato*, which piece has otherwise sunk into an equal oblivion; but it provided what was for generations by far the most popular speech for little boys to learn to recite to their parents. 'I am sure,' says Tom Bertram in *Mansfield Park*, 'my name was Norval, every evening of my life through one Christmas holidays.'

The fame of *Douglas* sprang into being on the first night of its presentation—December 14, 1756—and was never interrupted until it had run its whole course, to within the memory of people still living. But the reason for its continuous popularity is perfectly natural and indeed normal. It is a good, exciting play—though Miss Naomi Royde-Smith has pulled it to pieces very effectively, with a sort of good-humoured cruelty, in her *Private Life of Mrs. Siddons*—and there is plenty of evidence that, without a cast of more than average merit, it could hold any audience by its firmly drawn characters and the well-devised intensity of its dramatic climaxes. If Home had been as much of a poet as Marlowe or even Dryden, we might still see *Douglas* being revived from time to time at the Old Vic or the provincial repertory theatres. His play does contain some striking lines, such as

‘Red came the river down, and loud and oft
The angry spirit of the water shriek’d’

and

'I might have been a shepherd all my days,
And stole obscurely to a peasant's grave.
Now, if I live, with mighty chiefs I stand;
And if I fall, with noble dust I lie.'

But a certain woolly pomposity of phrasing keeps many of the best speeches in the play within a dangerous distance of the ludicrous, and, to a modern ear, the piece has 'dated' badly.

The quality of Home's writing accounts for his play's long popularity; but that its success was so instantaneous and overwhelming was due to the atmosphere surrounding its first production, at the Canongate Theatre, Edinburgh. Comedy and jealousy, intrigue and crusade, commercial or artistic enthusiasm and national pride were all mixed up together. 'The novelty,' says a contemporary letter, 'of a play being writ by a member of the Church, by a Scotsman, and first represented in Scotland, has given rise to a vast deal of fun.'

The struggles of the author to get his play produced, after taking five years to write it, had already become a story in themselves. Home had got the idea of his plot from the old ballad of *Gil Morrice*, which was printed in Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, but it germinated slowly, and he was exemplary in the time he took to polish his lines. (It may be noted that Home's verse is extremely speakable, a fact which may have had much to do with its effectiveness on the stage.) For many months the play was circulated in manuscript between Dr. Alexander Carlyle, Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto, and other of Home's friends. Finally, on a snowy morning in February, 1754, Home set out for London, with something of the enterprise of the youngest son of the fairy-story starting forth to seek his fortune. He rode a stout galloway named Piercy, and carried his precious manuscript in one pocket of his greatcoat and a clean shirt and nightcap in the other. A bevy of Border ministers attended him for part of the way, and sped their poetical colleague with good wishes. But Garrick pronounced *Douglas* 'totally unfit for the stage,' and Home had to return to Scotland after relieving his feelings by writing some verses to Shakespeare's image in Westminster Abbey.

The patronage and friendship, however, of such eminent men as Lord Elibank, Lord Milton, Sir Gilbert Elliot, William Robertson,

and Adam Ferguson, mended Home's fortunes, and it was decided that if London would not consider *Douglas*, Edinburgh should give it to the world.

The Canongate Theatre had also had its ups and downs. It had only been founded in 1746, but had already changed hands twice. Its early years had brought it little success beyond killing the rival venture at the Taylors' Hall. In 1752 an actor named Lee became owner and manager, but he rapidly got into debt to the Edinburgh tradesmen, and was finally imprisoned in February, 1756, when an inventory was made of the properties of the theatre for selling-up, and Hamlet's armour, it is recorded, was valued at three and sixpence. Lee, however, in a previous attempt to safeguard his venture, had given a deed of conveyance of the theatre to a group of sixteen Edinburgh lawyers and business men, which included James Burnet, afterwards Lord Monboddo, and Alexander Lockhart of Craighouse, afterwards Lord Covington. They now assumed control of the theatre, and engaged West Digges, then performing in Dublin, as leading actor in Lee's place. The unfortunate Lee disappears from the scene. Ten months later *Douglas* was produced.

Alexander Carlyle, an intimate friend of Home, and familiar with all the backers of the production, attended two of the rehearsals, but did not venture, being a minister, to go publicly to see the play until the third performance. But he expected and appreciated the play's success. 'The town in general was in an uproar of exultation that a Scotchman had written a tragedy of the first rate, and that its merit was first submitted to their judgment.' But there was controversy over the production. 'Lord Elibank and David Hume, &c.,' were 'running about and crying it up as the first performance the world had seen for half a century'; but the 'Wild' or 'Highflyer' party in the General Assembly, the 'die-hards' of the old conventions, divided their time between abuse of the author and detraction of the play. Next spring, when the General Assembly met, the Highflyers, headed by Robert Dundas of Arniston, then King's Advocate, and Dr. Alexander Webster, who, in Carlyle's succinct phrase, 'had no bowels, and who could do mischief with the joy of an ape,' delivered a furious attack on those ministers who had dared to visit the playhouse, and Home himself was forced to leave his parish of Athelstaneford. His worldly loss was nothing, for he went to London again, where he had a very different reception from that

of three years earlier, and got his play produced by Garrick and a pension of £100 a year from the Prince of Wales.

The dust of that agitation, however, which is fully described in Carlyle's *Autobiography*, has long settled, and the subject of this paper is the impact of *Douglas* upon the society of Edinburgh. The satirical ballads of a brilliant and indiscreet young advocate, John Maclaurin, afterwards Lord Dreghorn, who supported the Highflyer party, were replied to by Ferguson and Carlyle with a barrage of pamphlets which, hawked through the streets of Edinburgh, kept public interest alive and filled the theatre night after night. To add to the production's good fortune, there was a very capable company at the Canongate. Digges was not only a good actor, but his 'figure and address' were much admired. He had been an ensign in the army, and at the time of the 'Forty-Five' was stationed at Glasgow. 'I was there,' writes Carlyle, 'and thought him very agreeable. He was, however, a great profligate and spendthrift; and poltroon, I'm afraid, into the bargain.' Forced to leave the army, he went on the stage, and though not a success in London, made a reputation in Dublin, and became very popular at Edinburgh, where he remained before the public for twenty years. He was dashing and handsome, and possessed a voice with 'a certain melancholy tone' which wrung tears from the female part of his audience. Sarah Ward, the principal actress, had also scored a great success under the régime of the 'gentlemen managers,' and had all the young bloods of Edinburgh at her feet.

There is no doubt that Edinburgh got slightly hysterical over the whole business. When respectable ministers risked censure and dismissal from their charges by attending the theatre, and Burnet jeopardised his practice as an advocate and scandalised his country clients by ostentatiously handing ladies to their boxes, it was not surprising that the ladies, and sometimes their attendant cavaliers as well, spent most of the performances in floods of tears. There is also that famous legend of the voice from the gallery which cried through the applause, 'Whaur's your Wullie Shakespeare now?' A comparatively calm spectator, George Dempster of Dunnichen, wrote an account of the play to his friend Adam Fergusson, then travelling on the Continent, which comes pretty near to what the verdict of a modern audience would probably be:

'I am neither disposed to give it that high rank which many do nor to deprecate it as much as others have done. . . . I was

desired to bring a white handkerchief and yet I walked off dry eyed tho' few people are more open to those tender representations than I am. Here and there a scene moved me but the languor and prolixity of the succeeding one quite effaced that impression and my grief did not flow in a continued torrent always augmenting in force and irresistability till the end of the piece, which I take to be the true characteristic of the pathos in tragedy. The last time, however, that I saw this piece represented it gave me more pleasure, he having made some very judicious alterations, by dividing some scenes, adding others and varying altogether the manner of their deaths.'

Another of Fergusson's correspondents, a young advocate named George Wallace, who later suffered professionally from his adherence to the Moderate party in the General Assembly, wrote to his friend on December 28, 1756, a lively account of the production which may be taken as embodying typical Edinburgh opinion at the time :

'I durst not venture to go the first night—I feared the crowd—but I ventured the second, and I assure you was not a little surprized—I am serious—I think it the tragedy that acts best of any I ever saw. I was charmed, and, what is more, in spite of my self I wept. Indeed, there was not, I believe, one dry eye in the whole house. And what is most excellent, your tears proceed more from the series of events than from an accidental speech said with energy and in a moving manner. I think it is the only play that I ever saw, of which I can say this—for in others tears rush into one's eyes of a sudden, when you are not aware, but are moved with some short expression. But here your pity is raised higher and higher, by the series of events, till it comes to a certain *ἀκμή*, and tears must *necessarily* flow. It was acted 7 nights before our Christmas vacation—viz. the five nights of the week it was first presented¹—on the Saturday the players told the audience another play was to be acted on Monday, but they would have none but *Douglas*. The same thing happened on Monday so it was acted again on Wednesday. I believe it might have run more nights but Mrs. Ward, who plays the principal female part, was so fatigued (and no wonder, for her part was both very long and very passionate) that she could hold out no longer—so, to give her ease, it was positively determined to act it no more after Wednesday till the Session should sit down after Christmas. The house was full every night—a great matter in a place like

¹ The first night was a Tuesday.

Edinburgh, where there are hardly two house-fulls of different people. I saw it twice ; and liked it as well the second as the first time. Indeed, it met with universal applause—David Hume says it is the best thing of the kind in the English language. Several of the Lords of Session, Barons, and some ministers went to see it. The ladies were charmed—tho' there is no love in it. It represents conjugal, maternal and filial affection in a strong manner. It would be useless to give you a detail of the events ; for it would spoil your relish for it. John Maclaurin, and one or two more, who are either disposed by nature to snarl, or have blunt feelings, happening to be there the first night, ridiculed it—but the general voice was too strong for them—they seemed to be willing to eat in what they had said. When I say so much, I mean only as to the acting—for I never read it, and it got all justice done it by the actors. Indeed, it was charmingly acted. Yet, I imagine it will read well too—at least, I am told, by such as have read it, and who are able to judge, (Mr. Blair particularly) that it reads well. No doubt, the propriety and strength of the action added greatly to the effect. Hume [sic] is going to London to make another attempt to get it acted—for his friends are now in power and, if he fails this time, he is to print it. He made no bargain with the managers of our playhouse, but he is to get about £300—no small matter for Edinburgh. I own, there are some errors in it, but it is so good a work, that it ought not to be criticized. Besides, they are trifling, and may be yet amended easily—particularly, your pity is raised too high in the early parts of the play, the three first acts, which makes one think there is a sinking towards the end. The unravelling is not absolutely perfect. But enough of it—tho' the town is full of little else.'

It was twenty-eight years later that Mrs. Siddons appeared in Edinburgh in *Douglas*, which was by then well launched on its long career of triumph. Lady Randolph was one of the most famous parts in her repertory.

But *Douglas* did not depend for its effect solely on the presence of a great actress in the leading rôle. It has been acted often enough to show that it is, as actors say, 'good theatre.' Probably it has suffered unduly from the ridicule of Dr. Johnson, that sturdy and wooden-headed detractor of all literature written by Scotsmen. When he was staying at Inveraray, Boswell attempted to take up his challenge to Thomas Sheridan to find only ten good lines in the play. He quoted one of the worst examples of mere rhetoric in the whole piece, and Johnson crushed him by repeating a passage from Juvenal—' And, after this, comes Johnny Home, with his

earth gaping, and his destruction crying—Pooh!' Such criticism is, of course, as inconclusive as it is unfair, but it is comparable to the modern taste which condemns all blank-verse tragedies which do not happen to have been written by Shakespeare. It would be interesting to see whether some enterprising manager could, by judicious cuts and careful casting, repeat to-day the initial triumph of Mr. Home's tragedy, even if it is not quite 'the best thing of the kind in the English language.'

INSCRIPTION FOR AN OLD TOMB.

AND when lord Death with all his gear
Stays his untiring horses here,
Disarms Possession, Love and Pride,
And goes his way with me beside :
Then do not grieve that I have gone
But this my latest journey on,
Nor think, because thy love is slain,
That thou and I not meet again :
But think I go with Death before
A little space and nothing more,
Finding a way and home for thee
When thou, in time, dost follow me.

CLIVE SANSOM.

FRU.

BY HUMFREY JORDAN.

In their hearts the Windles both considered that they had a way with animals. Since animals and their ways bulked so largely in their lives they naturally refused to make any public claim to special knowledge of them, but, occasionally, in domestic privacy they would admit to each other that, in this respect, they might not be altogether fools.

Even timid and horse-ignorant persons, they maintained, could on Sunday afternoons or other hallowed occasions enter the boxes of the Windle hunters without risk of being kicked or bitten.

'It's really a poor jest,' Bob Windle would assert, 'to ask some worthy visitor to come and see the youngsters and to have them laid out when they turn their heads to admire the view.'

'Besides,' Betty Windle would agree, 'when they recover consciousness they are never properly grateful at being told it was only the filly's play.'

'Same with dogs, of course, the smallest toothmark is never genuinely popular although presented with the best of feelings.'

'Or the brute that stands up on a new frock or ladders real silk stockings. No. Manners every time.'

Consequently visitors to the Windles could enter boxes where hunters rustled in wheaten straw, pass the time of day with various makes and shapes of dogs, or walk in fields where horses summered without discomfort.

So, when Fru joined the establishment only one member of it, Michael Windle, aged seven, Fru's official master, exhibited uncontrollable excitement. His parents having successfully imposed their human authority on a variety of creatures, even at one time certain wild things of the jungle, received a portly and mole-like elk-hound pup with proper pleasure but scarcely with excitement and certainly without misgiving.

Fru's registered name was Thorva, but Michael never had any use for that, so for obscure reasons he called the pup what sounded like Frudel. This was quickly abbreviated to Fru, so that difficulties about spelling the word never really arose. Fru is a good

name to call, provided you roll the 'R,' so Michael's obscure choice was recognised later as blessed with foresight. The pup was a half-brother of Viking, called Lop, who had been born and bred in the Windle establishment. The mother of both of them had been given by the Windles to a friend when they gave up breeding elk-hounds ; she was a well-mannered dame. Lop, sired by an English-bred champion and himself a winner of good prizes, was apart from his good looks a model of quiet gentility. Fru's father was an imported dog, who looked a villain but did amazingly well in the show-ring ; about his head he bore many scars of battle and it was alleged that in his youth he had hunted elks. This allegation came to be accepted as a fact by the Windle household.

Brought from the house of his birth to his new home in a car Fru suffered a good deal of attention, but he was not sick : this, Michael asserted, proved that he was a good dog and it certainly had something to do with his receiving the freedom of the nursery. Until his white pin-like puppy teeth were beginning to come out, until his nose had sharpened from its snub infancy and his fat little pads were under proper control, until his ears were erect and his coat was grey and black fur, not a species of moleskin, he was a nursery dog. He scarcely required training to the house, having the instinctive cleanliness of his breed ; he was a quiet sleeper and enjoyed good nights ; he was a most excellent playmate for his master. He might, indeed, have remained a nursery dog if pirates boarding a ship had not sent him to a kennel.

That happened when he was getting on for six months old, and regarded equitably it was really not his fault. He nearly went before when he was in the slipper and carpet and rug stage, which he took very badly ; but the fact that he had such marked ability in playing child's games was balanced against undue destruction of property. All dogs worth knowing smile ; Fru from the moment when he was not sick in the car was a hearty laugher. His mouth would open wide, his eyes dance, and he would roar with laughter at some delightful jest. Michael, naturally, would laugh too whether he happened to have seen the joke or not. The spectacle of the puppy and the child letting go their mirth was considered worth a shoe or so or the corner of a rug ; but both the boy and the dog were told that tearing anything would lead to trouble. Consequently Michael initiated Fru into the technique of games, and found a very adept pupil. As a bear in its den or a tiger in the jungle, tail uncurled and crouching hocks, eyes gleam-

ing, Fru's snapping jaws and his wild beast growling had the right quality about them. A stranger outside the nursery door might grow alarmed at the noise; but careful investigation—it needed care since neither player would put his heart into the game before an audience—would show two young things filled with delicious joy.

As a jungle character Fru was good, but as an English seaman repelling pirate boarders he was excellent. He knew his part exactly and would at the command 'Pirates!' jump into it with delighted anticipation in his grin. His ship was the nursery table; the order given he leapt on to it and awaited the attack. As the pirate came aboard he grappled; and he and Michael rolled upon the table in deadly grips. It was a heating game, but it taught them both the art of falling overboard without doing themselves damage on a hard floor.

One autumn afternoon Michael gave the pirate alarm without thinking; Fru obeyed with instant vigour. That the tea had not been cleared away did not stop him from springing to his post. He landed, as he should land, in the middle of the table; but the cloth went with him and so did everything on it. The noise of the crash brought the Windles, just back from hunting, away from their poached eggs and the smoking-room fire. The smash was awe-inspiring, that the faces of both Michael and Fru showed, but the resultant decree that the dog had got too large for the nursery was held by both of them to be unjust and was defied on every suitable occasion.

It was soon after he went to sleep in a house and run of his own that Fru killed his first rabbit. He had caught several, of course, before, but that was his first clean kill and he was duly praised for being workmanlike. During the praising Michael discovered that his dog had cut a two-in-one adult tooth. As a puppy he had two teeth grown together, and the peculiarity had always been a source of joy to his master. That the two in one had appeared in permanent form was a matter for great rejoicing. Together with the clean killing it marked Fru as a creature of distinction. It made his living out of doors less blatantly unjust. A dog who had two teeth in one who could hunt and kill was perhaps rightly past the nursery stage. Michael, having been instructed that one did not boast one's own wares, was careful what he said about his dog; but he usually said something. To strangers of uncertain sympathy he would mention casually that

he had a nice dog called Fru, whom he would show to them, if they liked, and that Fru's tail carriage was good ; for persons of recognised understanding he would produce Fru, name his puppy's exact age to a week, and explain that he was already nearly as fast as Lop ; but to tried friends only would he show the adult two-in-one tooth. The proof, final and conclusive, that he owned a dog distinguished beyond all other dogs, was reserved for people who would put its real value on that remarkable tooth. Yet even the uncertain strangers who heard, casually, about Fru's tail carriage recognised him as an ideal child's dog.

Throughout his first summer Fru's progress followed a usual course. He never looked like having the quiet gentility of Lop, he was always more demonstrative and eager, hunting at full stretch, racing back from the search for rabbits to laugh with his human companions, tearing off again to catch up lost time. His games were never decorous. He would tug small Cairns by the tails until they lost their tempers and then rolling on his back, but unable to suppress his grin, pretend that he was frightened of their snaps, which offended their dignity and made them more angry than before ; colliding with Lop when they were both galloping amused him immensely, especially when they both fell. He developed and perfected the elaborate ritual of his master blowing in his face. Michael blew at him and Fru drew back, his black nose moist with eagerness, his golden brown eyes delighted at what was to come ; Michael followed and blew again ; Fru leapt and Michael ran. If the dog could knock the child down with a legitimate blow from outstretched forepaws, tripping did not count, though it often happened, he won. The game was barred in the gardens and not encouraged near the stream below the orchards, but it was often played with proper attention to the rules on both sides. So was football, but there rules did not exist : the child kicked the ball, the dog tried to get away with it until both were at a standstill. Fru was boisterous, but the gayest and merriest creature imaginable. When he plagued the other dogs and the joke seemed to him immeasurably good he always recognised the moment when the others had had enough ; when Michael did not want to play, Fru was disappointed but would not pester him.

On a July evening, in the cool after dinner, on the uplands by Fox's Gorse, with the golden light of English summer just come upon the land, the scent of hay and the rattle of mowers filling the air, the Windles were out with the dogs. Turning the south

corner of the covert they came on a flock of ewes who raised their heads from the grass at sight of the disturbers of their peace. Lop and the Cairns, naturally, took no notice of the ewes ; Fru did notice them. He charged towards them gaily ; it was gaily, but he charged. Called he did not come. When the flock was on the run Fru stopped and stared at them as though puzzled. Apparently he decided that the silly creatures were of little interest. Laughing he returned to the Windles and was astonished to find himself put on a lead with all the circumstance of serious crime.

'He didn't mean anything,' Betty Windle argued, as she led home a depressed pup. 'Never looked like attempting to worry them. Still !'

'He grew suddenly deaf. And sheep and deafness do not do.'

So next morning Michael and his Nanny were carefully instructed that should Fru so much as turn his head towards a sheep the matter must be reported in detail.

A few days later Fru met a badger and his behaviour seemed to indicate that his interest in strange creatures was sensible. It was not later than six in the afternoon, the dogs were working a hedgerow beyond a paddock where the hunters summered without, apparently, much hope of finding a rabbit at that hour. A sudden growling of a voice they did not know brought the Windles from the green lane, where they strolled, to investigate. Lop, somewhat shamefaced, was finding interest in an opposite direction, the little Cairns were frankly in retreat, but Fru, grinning and delighted, shaking his head on one side to invite a game, capered alongside a boar badger. He was a huge tawny fellow, and as he lumbered at amazing speed through the grass he kept his striped head low to ground to protect his vulnerable throat. Cursing interference with deep growling, his bright eyes watching the puppy, his snapping jaws compelling respect, he scuttled for the cover of the ditch. In a second he was gone, but the puppy did not follow him to the shelter of the undergrowth.

A badger in the sunlight was new to the Windles ; they discussed it eagerly. Love conquering almost unconquerable shyness seemed the probable solution. But they were pleased with Fru ; he had shown himself at once no cur and no fool ; he had neither fled nor got within reach of the deadly jaws.

So, as it became increasingly evident that Fru would be neither cur nor fool, since he had taken to human companionship with

liking and with understanding, the trouble came the more unexpectedly.

It first showed itself a week or so after the encounter with the badger. On an evening after rain when the sunset was painting a crystal clear sky and coaxing from the steaming earth a medley of enchanting scents, when voices of bird and beast and gentle wind were blended to soft harmony at the command of peace, when the green beauty and the resting quiet of that West country-side shaped enchantment, Fru killed a small rabbit, ate part of it, and lay up. Ignoring utterly a man's and a woman's commands, oblivious to the scandalised surprise of his companion dogs, he chose a thick spot at the root of a hedge and wormed his way into it. There, protected by bramble and briar and thorn, he lay, watching, resentful of disturbance, determined. His laughter had vanished, in his quick movements there was slinking : he was a creature of the wild, back to the routine of the wild, having hunted, killed and eaten he must sleep in security. The Windles had a job to get him out ; he retreated when they got near to him, snarling. When, scratched with thorn and stung with nettles, they finally got a hand to him he looked like biting but stopped at the feel of a wrist between his jaws. On a lead, making for home, he recovered himself ; before he reached the house he was laughing again. The other dogs were depressed and self-conscious on account of the exhibition ; Fru appeared to have forgotten it.

'We shall have to watch out, Betty,' Bill Windle stated, as he shut the puppy into the run. 'This sort of thing has got to be nipped in the bud.'

'That elk-hunting sire !' his wife answered.

And that seemed to them sufficient comment for the moment. They had known before dogs and other creatures not easy to train. A spice of difficulty in the training, some hesitation before accepting real companionship, were all to the good. A dog without individuality, a willing slave of human whims was poor sort of company. On that summer evening the Windles were in no way seriously disturbed about Fru.

But within a fortnight they were getting anxious, within a month they were seriously alarmed. The trouble developed so quickly and with such determination ; before the faintest tang of autumn had shown itself in the early mornings it was an accomplished fact. Fru in the gardens or the nursery or his own quarters, with his gay laughter, his eagerness, his joy in human ways, his

understanding of men and women, his devotion to a child was one creature, Fru in the fields and woods wholly another.

The dogs of the Windle household very seldom saw a main road, and they were always bitterly resentful if they were kept to a by-road or a lane for more than a hundred yards or so at a time. From the age when they could take a decent spell of exercise they were accustomed to range across country, working. A sight of them at work supplied accurate information as to their ages : the youngsters inclined to be over-eager, needlessly energetic, the next generation alert and purposeful, keeping excitement till it should be justified, the middle-aged and the elderly given to saving themselves, using their longer experience of place and position and the ways of rabbits to keep them in the hunt, scornful of wild and noisy pursuit of quarry that must escape. But old and young they worked a familiar country-side together. As a rabbit pack they had a decent local reputation and the freedom of a widish tract of country. Farmers welcomed them as useful destroyers of vermin, and would send down to the house to give notice of any trapping so that they should not come to harm. They were not uninvited poachers, making stealthy raids upon other people's lands. Daily and openly they went with the Windles to hunt rabbits, since hunting rabbits was natural to their kind. That they were a disciplined little pack was as much at the basis of their good reputation as the fact that they were skilled at their job. So, when Fru threatened to shatter the tradition of discipline, the thing looked serious.

The pack was nearing home after a good hunt which had ended in the death of a sizeable rabbit. Tongues lolling and dripping, breath coming in quick pants, they walked to heel soberly ; even Fru, a little apart from the other dogs according to his habit, seemed tired with his exertions. They walked on the shady side of an untrimmed fence in which ash saplings had grown almost to the standing of small trees. The sun was declining but still high in a blue sky flecked with puffs of white. It was that hour when horses and men are returning from the fields. The day's work over, food and rest beckoned. Walking in the shade the little pack of dogs seemed contentedly aware of the ending of a satisfactory day. On the other side of the untrimmed hedge Mrs. Samways' laying hens scratched and clucked, grouping themselves around their own particular wheeled lodging, anticipating the arrival of their evening meal. The voices of hens are not usually

inspiring, but they inspired Fru to sudden activity. Perhaps a cluck of more than ordinary complacency exasperated him, perhaps his sense of humour was suddenly tickled by the thought of putting an end to a display of strutting self-importance ; but whatever his motives he acted with despatch. Trotting quietly supperwards, he suddenly paused, head cocked, bright eyes dancing ; then like a grey streak he was through the hedge and the complacency of egg-producing fowl was no more. He harried masterfully, but he did not kill. There was much noise, much flying of feathers, considerable movement ; then the joke palled and Fru had leisure to recognise the note in the Windles' calling. Turning from hen-harrying he fled from that note and took cover in a cottage garden amongst gooseberry bushes. He lay panting and furtive, waiting to be fetched.

The material damage was not great ; two hens had lost their tails, many appeared to have suffered shock, but Mrs. Samways took the raid in good part. She appeared considerably surprised at such conduct from a Windle dog. So, when Fru was dragged from the gooseberry bushes, did Tom Martin, the owner of the bushes and a mole-like person, whose evening ablutions in a bucket had been disturbed.

' Won't come when ee'm called,' he commented when Fru was led away. ' Can ye get 'im like the others, sir ? '

' He's young, Tom,' Bill Windle smiled confidently. ' He'll come to it right enough.'

But he was very angry ; so was Betty Windle. There had been too many witnesses of their inability to control one of their own animals. Fru was beaten and led home amongst dogs who clearly showed depression at his disgrace. He bared his teeth at the beating ; he was sullen on the lead. Half an hour after he had been shut into his run he appeared, smiling broadly, in the garden having managed to get over a wire fence seven feet high. His sullenness had gone, he was very merry, but he refused to allow himself to be caught. Feeling much humiliated, the Windles were reduced to sending for Michael. In dressing-gown and slippers, for he had been about to bathe, very proud, Michael appeared in the garden and called his dog. Fru without the slightest hesitation, but obviously enjoying the joke, obeyed the call and trotted obediently beside his triumphant master. While a net was being fixed over the top of the run so that Fru should not escape again, Michael was allowed to postpone his bathing and talk to his dog.

The talk seemed to give considerable pleasure to both parties, but questions of discipline did not enter into it. The two-in-one tooth was examined, the excellent tail carriage was praised, the tail itself forcibly uncurled until the desired result of a boisterous wrestling match, very damaging to a dressing-gown, was obtained. Michael went to his bath much in need of cleansing. He did not boast with words, but his pride in having secured obedience from Fru when his parents had failed was obvious. When he lay sleeping an hour or so later his face wore something resembling a smirk of satisfaction.

That was the next phase of the Windles' humiliation, and it lasted several weeks. There was only one human being whom Fru would obey, a small boy aged seven. Beating did no good at all, and was soon abandoned. Fru showed violent resentment when being beaten, he snapped his fine jaws furiously but could not bring himself actually to biting. When the beating was over he laughed, unashamed and uninstructed. Other disciplinary measures were tried ; they failed. When Michael formed one of the party the dog would come to his call ; when the child was absent he went his own way ignoring all commands. His way was generally the way of the Windles and the rest of the pack ; if left strictly to himself he might even return home with the others ; but, summoned by any other person than his small master, he would deliberately wander off with a fine air of independence arriving home either before or after, but never with the others. Since he obeyed a child the Windles were convinced that he would come to obey them. He did no harm, one joke with hens seemed to have satisfied him, he did not look at sheep. He was so merry, his joy in living was so eager that real anger with him was difficult. So the Windles continued to hope, putting Fru on a lead, which failed to banish his smile, when Michael was not out and they were pressed for time. Then Fru ceased to obey Michael.

In the dusk of an autumn evening the boy was putting him into his run when Fru bolted. Michael called to him sternly. Fru stopped, some yards away, roaring with laughter, his tail showing delight ; as an angry child approached him he turned and ran through an orchard out into the fields. Michael's pursuit was vain from the start, but he continued it until too absorbed a following of a moving shadow, which turned out to be a cat, landed him in the stream beyond the orchard. He returned to the stables apparently oblivious of having eclipsed all previous

records in getting himself muddy, loudly insistent on the immediate formation of a search party. Fudge, the groom, having given sound advice about a stealthy back entry to the house and an instant change of clothes, promised to be the search party. Later Bill Windle got out a car and relieved Fudge. He heard of Fru, but did not see him. The dog was reported two miles or more away, a grey shadow, ranging the night. At dinner the Windles discussed the possible consequences of night ranging and Betty reported that the chances of Michael going to sleep seemed small. As they left the dining-room and crossed the hall a miserable voice called to them from the head of the stairs.

'Has Fru come back?'

'Not yet,' Bill Windle called confidently. 'But he will be back presently. You see he hasn't had his supper yet. Hop back to bed, old man, and stop there. We will look after Fru.'

Footsteps sounded along an upstairs passage, but there was no suggestion of hopping about them. In a long, low, old, beamed smoking-room, comfortably before the fire on a wide hearth the Windles discussed the difficult case of Fru. They were reading and smoking, occasionally exchanging a word, when hard on a guilty tap the door opened and a small dressing-gowned figure appeared. Michael stood in shadow staring at his parents, comfortable and at ease before the fire, with a look of incredulous horror.

'It's raining,' he announced. 'You can't, oh, you can't leave my Fru out in the rain all night alone.'

Bill Windle got up from his comfortable arm-chair.

'Look here, Michael,' he commanded, 'you get back to bed and don't be silly. I told you I would look after Fru and I shall. Take him up, Betty, please. And remember, old man, you stop in bed this time.'

He went out of the smoking-room with a fine air of command. But Betty wondered whether the small, anxious figure in the dressing-gown had recognised behind the words guilt at being discovered warmly comfortable in defiance of a specific undertaking. She guessed that her son had.

Mackintoshed and gum-booted Bill Windle went out. It was raining. The door of the run was open, the supper untouched in its place, but Fru was not there. Bill Windle whistled, without hope of any answer. A low whine answered him. He turned sharply, flashing an electric torch. Fru, very wet, very miserable

and ashamed, was crouching between two garden frames. For some inexplicable canine reason he had been unable to go the length of returning quietly to his supper and his bed. Bill Windle firmly believed that he would have crouched all night where he had been crouching since before the rain began. For upon examination the grass beneath the crouching dog was dry. Yet, found by one of the human creatures whose command he defied, Fru trotted obediently to his run. He seemed oppressed by a heavy burden of guilt and would not look at his supper.

' You're a fool,' Bill Windle told the dog as he shut him in, ' a plain damn fool. I hope you're nothing worse.'

Returning to the house he wondered what tale of harried ewes might greet him in the morning.

Michael received the news of the prodigal's return with the ingenious argument that if Fru were allowed to sleep with him it would teach the dog never to run away again. The argument was not accepted as convincing; but the Windles, without informing Michael, did accept the fact that the problem of Fru's future was becoming difficult.

There was no tale of harried ewes in the morning and Fru was very merry. He came into the house after breakfast and had a game with Michael in the nursery; he obeyed the rules of the game as he had learned them since he was a small pup, but in the afternoon, walking with his master, he utterly refused obedience. He paid no more attention to Michael's call than to Bill's or Betty's. On the way home he trotted with the rest of the pack until they were in sight of the house, then he, having exchanged deliberate glances with the human creatures, went off on his own. But at the approach of dusk he was back waiting beside, but not in, his run. Like his joke with Mrs. Samways' laying hens, one lonely nocturnal expedition seemed enough.

Bill and Betty compromised; they said that they would wait and see what happened for a little longer before making a decision about the dog's future. But, they were both commendably firm about that, a dog who finally refused to accept their mastership could not, of course, be kept.

The decision came with an early December fall of snow, an unusual happening in that mild country-side. The sun rose in a hard cloudless sky on a sparkling fairyland of white. It was freezing hard and a keen wind set scurries of powdered jewels dancing. West Country England to show its singular powers of

versatility had produced a perfect Alpine winter day. The Windles, who had hoped to hunt foxes, were not too pleased. Michael knew sheer joy. He awoke to the thrill of the reflected light upon his bedroom ceiling, jumped from his bed and into his clothes, pretended that he had washed himself, and was outside in the glorious exhilaration of sparkle and whiteness before his Nanny had reasonable time to impress upon him that he must not be late for breakfast. He went straight to Fru's run and let the dog out.

Fru had never seen snow before, but it was in the blood of his elk-hunting ancestors. It went to his head. He raced madly round in a circle; he rolled, biting at the snow. Michael bombarded him with snowballs and for a few moments he enjoyed the game. Then, ignoring the shouts of his playfellow, he was off. Something in his gait alarmed Michael. He dashed for the stables, where he found his mother and father.

'I let Fru out,' he announced, 'to snowball. And he's gone off. And he looked funny—all wolfy.'

'Damn,' said Bill Windle, apprehensive of what unmastered dogs who looked wolfy might do. 'Then there's no breakfast for you, Michael, until he's back. Come on.'

It was easy to track Fru in the snow. At first Michael enjoyed it, chatting gaily; but when he realised that his parents were really anxious he fell silent. Fru's tracks led through the orchard across the stream and up the long slope of Knoll field. At the top of the Knoll he was sighted, a quarter of a mile away at the corner of Witches' Gorse. As the pursuit came into sight he cocked his head and went off at a loping, slinking gallop. Michael's description 'wolfy' seemed well chosen. He did not look like a domestic dog; his appearance proclaimed him a wild animal happily back to the wild.

Beyond Witches' Gorse his tracks became confused; he had turned and twisted, run in circles, crossed and re-crossed his own line. After some trouble he was traced to a grass ride, down it, through a gateway at the end into Oakley pasture heading for Hanging Wood. In Oakley pasture there were other tracks.

'Sheep,' Bill Windle muttered, 'on the move too.'

'Oh!' Betty sighed. No more, but Michael glanced, frightened, at her.

He had lived his seven years in the country and knew what dogs might do to sheep. But he was loyal in his fright.

'Fru wouldn't touch sheep,' he declared, 'I know he wouldn't, I know it.'

On the other side of Hanging Wood that loyal assurance seemed very worthless. Fru had a flock of ewes rounded up in the angle between the wood and a cut-and-laid fence. He stood facing them, his jaws gaping, tongue lolling out, his breath smoking. The ewes, like the dog, were panting; unlike him they were frightened. On that keen sparkling morning, although they were more than a hundred to one, they knew only fear. But there was no blood on Fru's jaws. He turned his head with a quick glance as the Windles came round the corner of the covert; then, his eager eyes watching the ewes again, he moved a yard or two farther from the new arrivals. It was very plain that, prevented from amusing himself with silly sheep, he intended to go off on other alluring pursuits.

Michael, sighting him, called to his dog with a note of entreaty. Fru laughed and moved another yard or two away. Michael ran forward, stumbled, and fell flat on his face. Fru seemed to consider that a fine diversion; noisily he sprang upon his small friend, rolling him over. But Michael did not lose his head; he gripped the dog's collar and held on. Fru, captured, made no resistance but laughed heartily. The sheep, unharmed and relieved of anxiety, bleated foolishly.

The Windles in front, Michael with his dog on a lead following, the small procession started for home. The wind in that upland place blew keen, sending light clouds of sparkling powder in twisting scurries, the air intoxicated, the sunshine spoke of joy, but except for Fru who laughed noisily and kept jumping up on his master, the little procession moved in glum silence. As they came round the end of Witches' Gorse Bill Windle spoke.

'Apart from other things,' he said, 'I simply can't afford the chance of being landed with a bill of damages for sheep that might easily run into hundreds. That performance finishes it.'

'Yes,' Betty answered, unhappy, reluctant but agreed.

Michael, his ears alert, gave a little gasp.

'The dog must go to the vet. That's all there is to it.'

'Yes,' said Betty again.

She and Bill walked on, unhappy but determined. Michael made a sound between a moan and a cry. He halted, dropped on his knees and put his arm round the dog's neck. Then, leading Fru, he followed his parents. It was not acting; in that

bright morning of nature's delight it was real tragedy. Those arms about his neck with no word spoken seemed to have told the dog some grim truth. His tail uncurled, his merriness vanished, he walked with the spring gone from his movements, casting alarmed glances at the small boy beside him. Michael, his face bewildered with horror, dry-eyed but shaken with gasping sobs faced the full meaning of the first death sentence he had ever heard. Fru, frightened by the quality of those sobs, whimpered miserably.

In that gay sunshine and sparkle the little procession moved on. It reached the top of the Knoll. At the sight of his home below him the meaning of the sentence hit Michael with greater violence; he halted again, knelt, and put his arms round Fru.

The Windles glanced back, hesitated, walked on again with a fine air of determination, stopped.

'It's sheer, stupid sentimentality,' Bill Windle muttered, looking at the pair of young creatures who were not acting. 'Besides, it's not fair on the farmers . . .'

'A dog who might do anything. It's impossible,' Betty agreed determinedly, but added as Michael raised his face from the grey fur in which he had buried it, 'still, he didn't hurt those sheep . . .'

'Damn the sheep,' Bill stated. 'It is not possible. Because, I suppose, we were born fools. Hi, Michael! Get along and tell them we want breakfast. And see that you shut up that obedient hound of yours.'

Michael asked for no confirmation of the reprieve, but his look told his parents that faith in love was again alive in him. In the fine windy sparkle he raced off with Fru; and they both took a complicated toss at the bottom of the slope.

Michael now spends most of the year at school. Fru in term-time is usually led when he takes his exercise, but his merriness and joy of living are undimmed. When his master returns for the holidays they play the old games and very often Fru escapes and returns when it suits him. So far there has been no claim for damage to sheep. It is humiliating for the Windles who have not been defeated by an animal before. But the decision of that winter day is, of course, irrevocable; and, being optimists, they hope that middle-age and portliness may give Fru sense.

THE RUNNING BROOKS.

Joan of Arc : Milton Waldman (Longmans, 12s. 6d. n.).
Byron : The Years of Fame : Peter Quennell (Faber, 15s. n.).
The Lady of Bleeding Heart Yard : Laura Norsworthy (Murray, 10s. 6d. n.).
The Last Puritan : George Santayana (Constable, 8s. 6d. n.).
Life Errant : Cicely Hamilton (Dent, 10s. 6d. n.).
Beany-Eye : David Garnett (Chatto & Windus, 5s. n.).
Salar the Salmon : Henry Williamson (Faber, 7s. 6d. n.).
Unfettered Ways : Ruby Cromer (Hodder & Stoughton, 8s. 6d. n.).
Knights Errant of Papua : Lewis Lett (Blackwood, 12s. 6d. n.).

In his 'Elizabeth,' a clear and vivid portrait of the great queen and her times, Mr. Milton Waldman made the mistake of finishing his work years before Elizabeth ended her reign : his *Joan of Arc* suffers under no such disability. He has set himself the difficult but fascinating task of dispelling from the Maid the legends which have collected round her marvellous story : they burdened her even in her lifetime ; they have obscured her greatness, whilst seeming to add to it, for all the intervening centuries. He has endeavoured to set before his readers the real Joan, a figure as human as heroic, and he has succeeded to a remarkable degree. He has done more : he has understanding, almost we might say sympathy, for all, and as a consequence he has clarified the motives of those who were lukewarm or indifferent and those who were actively hostile. Good as the whole book is, perhaps the best portion is also the most difficult, the account of the trial, the personalities, and the mentalities that were for their several reasons bent upon Joan's death. And over all and through all rises unquestionably supreme, even in disillusionment and despair, the strong-souled, valiant, sane, astonishing young girl who never lived to full womanhood and yet changed the history of France. This is a book that few can read without emotion and none without profit.

There are two other biographies of outstanding merit that will be of special interest to readers of CORNHILL. Both are books to be bought, for they are for permanent enjoyment and both are by contributors to CORNHILL.

In *Byron* : The Years of Fame, Mr. Peter Quennell confines himself to the years 1811-16, the years between Byron's return to England with the MS. of 'Childe Harold' and his final departure to

Byronic exile. Within these confines Mr. Quennell has given a fuller, deeper and a more convincing picture than has been given before, nor do these confines restrict the sweep of Byronic portraiture, which seems to gain in stature within this frame. Every event, every facet of Byron's life finds expression in these years in reflection or in prophecy. What years they were! Leading up from obscurity to fame and down the other side and at both ends insulated, so to speak, by the sea. A lifetime of experience, they are the scene of battle between Byron and boredom—the only enemy he could not fix to his shield of Destiny. Mr. Quennell has given these years a new shape. The book is the outcome of a fine memory, new information and a startling skill; it is a work of art and one for which the Byron gallery seems now to have been waiting.

The second is *The Lady of Bleeding Heart Yard*, by Mrs. Laura Norsworthy. In contrast to Byron Lady Elizabeth Hatton has never before been the subject of a biography. In view of her astonishing career this is a strange omission which Mrs. Norsworthy has now magnificently remedied. Lady Elizabeth Hatton was a Cecil, granddaughter of Queen Elizabeth's great Lord Treasurer, wife of Edward Coke (though refusing to take his name) and mother of Viscountess Purbeck, the sister-in-law of the Marquis of Buckingham. Lady Hatton is perhaps best known in connection with the Ingoldsby Legends, where there is more than a hint that she was in league with the devil. Not only has Mrs. Norsworthy cleared her reputation of that stigma, which was perhaps more damaging in former times, but she shows her to have been an outstanding figure of her period which stretched from Queen Elizabeth to the Civil War. In few books is there so vivid and energetic a picture of the times; the Courts of three sovereigns, the courts of law, masques and balls at Hatton House, escapades, the terrors of the plague, and behind it all the calm stateliness of her home, Hatton House in Holborn and the Garden where now diamond merchants trade. Had Lady Hatton been in league with the devil she could scarcely have lived a more spectacular life.

No one who appreciates highly distinguished writing and is not averse to being made to think should be deterred by its great length from reading Professor Santayana's Memoir in the form of a Novel, *The Last Puritan*. For it is as far removed from the general run of novels as its memorably depicted backgrounds are geographically wide apart. To describe it as 'a psychological study' is to

do it much less than justice. Yet that, in brief, is what it is. But a study informed with wisdom and understanding—profound, intuitive, ironical, the subtle working of no ordinary mind upon problems of inhibition and frustration as symbolised in the character and life of Oliver Alden.

Miss Cicely Hamilton's autobiography, *Life Errant*, is a frank, brave-hearted, generous book which reflects its author's personality in the mirror not only of what she has done, but also, and even more clearly, of what she is. 'An intelligent rolling-stone—a Jill-of-all-trades,' so the jacket of the book describes her. And, as far as actual 'doing' is concerned, the phrase is apt enough. What it leaves out is the warm sympathy and humour, the shrewd observation and common sense, the knowledge of the world and of human nature which make these charmingly written recollections of a varied career so significant and valuable a comment upon life, work, religion, politics, the suffrage movement, and the post-war world.

Much diligent thinking has, in the case of one reader at any rate, failed to capture any single suitable adjective by which to describe Mr. David Garnett's *Beany-Eye*. For this story of the lunatic handyman befriended by 'Mr. Butler,' so delicately and excitingly unfolded in less than a hundred and twenty pages, wears alternately the mask of comedy and tragedy with such effective contrasts of light and darkness as to leave one tremulous between laughter and tears—a tale in which pity is a constructive rather than an emotional factor and whose telling touches understanding and terror with the same revealing hand.

To read Mr. Henry Williamson's *Salar the Salmon* is to be transported to the very heart of the West country and to make engrossing acquaintance with the inhabitants of its rivers and estuaries and sea. The book is close-packed with technical details, but they are so skilfully woven into the texture of the life-history of Salar, his mate, Gralaks, and of all the other water creatures, and are so dramatically important that the stream of the narrative is quickened rather than impeded by them. It is a fine story, often thrilling, amazingly rich in knowledge, and so vividly written that the very waters of the rivers and streams, their currents and eddies, their weirs and their still pools assume the living significance of characters in an absorbing drama.

The West country is the inspiration also of some of the delicate little prose poems and pieces of free verse descriptive of many moods and scenes which make up Lady Cromer's *Unfettered Ways*.

Divided into four parts—County, City, Travel, and Abroad—the book takes the writer and reader to Canada, Egypt and elsewhere. The second part is, oddly enough, the most vivid and the most feelingly expressed : but readers in general as well as the author's many friends will be glad to have all of this graceful, thoughtful little volume, illustrated as it is with appropriate fancy and feeling by Violet Baring.

Readers of Mr. Lewis Lett's various Papuan articles in CORNHILL will have appreciated the skill with which he embellishes an intrinsically interesting subject. In *Knights Errant of Papua* he gives, with all the same skill applied to a larger canvas, a consecutive account of the methods by which the pacification of Papua is now being achieved—a striking illustration of the way in which the different white servants of the Australian Government impose order by rule rather than by force and so ensure peace without bloodshed.

OTHER NEW BOOKS

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A brilliant supplementary volume to the author's trilogy of Diplomatic History.

Samuel Pepys : The Years of Peril : Arthur Bryant (Cambridge University Press, 12s. 6d. n.).

The third volume of the great trilogy which throws a flood of interesting and individual light upon Pepys and definitely places Mr. Bryant in the front rank of modern historians.

Frustration : or Stresemann's Race with Death : Antonia Vallentin (Constable, 5s.).

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THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 146.

THE Editor of the CORNHILL offers two prizes of books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue, to the two solvers of the Literary Acrostic whose letters are opened first. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must contain the Coupon from page iv of the preliminary pages of this issue. They must reach the Editor by the 28th December.

' Your ——— ——— launch again
To match another foe ; '

1. ' O lift me from the ——— !
I die ! I faint ! I fail ! '
2. ' For some we loved, the ——— and the best
That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,'
3. and 6. { ' I saw ———n Egypt kneel adown
Before the vine-wreath crown ! '
4. ' Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ——— ,
5. ' not ———
For that which is most worthy to be blest —
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood.'
7. ' ——— the keel nine fathom deep,'
8. ' There is a silence where hath been no ———,
There is a silence where no sound may be.'

Answer to Acrostic 144, October number : ' And profoundest midnight shroud the *serene* lights of heaven ' (Shelley : ' Remorse '). 1. *StrainS* (Shelley : ' To a Skylark '). 2. *HuE* (Keats : ' Song of the Indian Maiden '). 3. *RangeR* (see number two). 4. *OpE* (Keats : ' Ode to Psyche '). 5. *UnseeN* (Keats : ' Ode to a Nightingale '). 6. *DeceiveE* (see numbers two and three).

The first correct answers opened were sent by Mrs. Jean Palmer, 10 Clark Avenue, Edinburgh, 5, and Miss E. G. Saunders, 23 Cedars Road, Clapham, S.W.4, who are invited to choose books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue.

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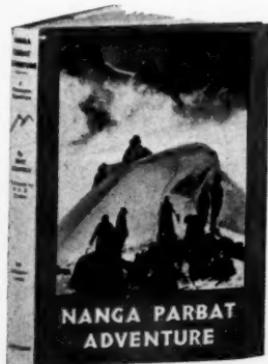
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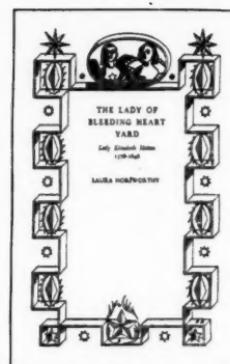
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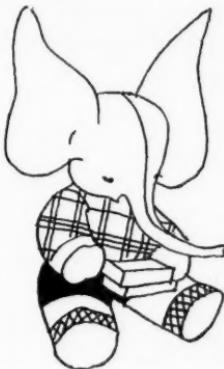
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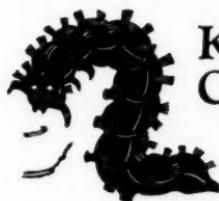
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